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SEEING AND HEARING





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# SEEING AND HEARING

BY

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TO  
WALTER SYDNEY SICHEL  
1868-1907

*"Ay, there are some good things in life, that fall not  
away with the rest,  
And of all best things upon earth, I hold that a faith-  
ful friend is the best."*

—OWEN MEREDITH.



# CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. THE CORONATION . . . . .	I
II. SECRET SOCIETIES . . . . .	10
III. THE IRISH PEERAGE . . . . .	17
IV. OMITTED SILHOUETTES . . . . .	25
V. DOCTORS AND DOCTORING . . . . .	31
VI. MOURNING . . . . .	39
VII. WILLS . . . . .	46
VIII. PENSIONS . . . . .	54
IX. THE SEASON AS IT WAS . . . . .	62
X. THE SEASON AS IT IS . . . . .	69
XI. THE SINS OF SOCIETY . . . . .	76
XII. OXFORD . . . . .	83
XIII. SCHOOLS FOR SHEPHERDS . . . . .	90
XIV. PILGRIMAGES . . . . .	97
XV. THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS . . . . .	105
XVI. SCHOOLS AND BOARDING-HOUSES . . . . .	113
XVII. SQUARES . . . . .	121
XVIII. SUNDAY IN LONDON . . . . .	128
XIX. A SUBURBAN SUNDAY . . . . .	135
XX. WINE AND WATER . . . . .	143
XXI. DINNER . . . . .	151
XXII. DINNERS . . . . .	158
XXIII. LUNCHEON . . . . .	166
XXIV. TEA . . . . .	174
XXV. SUPPER . . . . .	182

CHAP.	PAGE
XXVI. INNS AND HOTELS . . . . .	190
XXVII. TRAVEL . . . . .	198
XXVIII. ACCOMPLISHMENTS . . . . .	207
XXIX. CIDER . . . . .	214
XXX. THE GARTER . . . . .	221
XXXI. SHERIFFS . . . . .	229
XXXII. PUBLISHERS . . . . .	237
XXXIII. HANDWRITING . . . . .	245
XXXIV. AUTOGRAPHS . . . . .	252
XXXV. MORE AUTOGRAPHS . . . . .	259
XXXVI. CHRISTMAS . . . . .	266
XXXVII. NEW YEAR'S DAY . . . . .	274
XXXVIII. PETS . . . . .	283
XXXIX. PURPLE AND FINE LINEN . . . . .	289
XL. PRELACY AND PALACES . . . . .	297
XLI. HORRORS . . . . .	304
XLII. SOCIAL CHANGES . . . . .	312
XLIII. SOCIAL GRACES . . . . .	319
XLIV. PUBLICITY <i>v.</i> RETICENCE . . . . .	326
XLV. TOWN <i>v.</i> COUNTRY . . . . .	333
XLVI. HOME . . . . .	341
XLVII. HOSPITALITY . . . . .	348
XLVIII. OSTENTATION . . . . .	354
XLIX. PRINCIPLE AND PREJUDICE . . . . .	360
L. CULTURE . . . . .	367
LI. RELIGION . . . . .	374
LII. SUPERSTITION . . . . .	381
LIII. THE REMNANT . . . . .	388

# I

## THE CORONATION

AND so the great Act draws near—the “high midsummer pomp” of Patriotism and Regality and Religion—the “one far-off divine event” to which the whole social creation has moved since the day was appointed and the preparations began. A thousand pens will picture the Coronation as it actually occurs. Writing in advance, I can only contemplate it as a magnificent ideal, and describe it as it strikes not the eye and ear but the heart, the imagination, and the historic sense.

First and foremost and above all else, the Coronation is a religious act. It is imbedded in the very heart of the great Christian service of the Holy Eucharist. Litany and Introit and Gospel and Creed lead up to it, and it in turn leads on to *Te Deum* and Offertory and Consecration and Communion. But though (or perhaps because) it is thus supremely and conspicuously religious, the Coronation is national and secular and historical as well. Other nations do not crown their Sovereigns. Some have no crowns to give, and

others are in doubt about the rightful recipients ; in some, revolutions have shattered the immemorial landmarks, or the sharp sword of civil war has severed the sacred thread of succession, or the State itself is a mushroom growth of yesterday, with no roots and fibres striking deep down to the bedrock of the national life.

But here in England we crown our kings as we have crowned them for a thousand years, and our act of crowning is the august symbol of a nation's story and a people's will. For before ever the ministers of God approach the altar, before the sacred emblems of sovereignty are hallowed, before the Christian's Mysteries begin, before the Eternal Spirit is invoked and the consecrating unction bestowed, the English people plays its part, and, through the mouth of its chief citizen asserts its fundamental place in the system of the Kingly Commonwealth.

Sirs, I here present unto you King Edward, the undoubted King of this realm ; wherefore all you who are come this day to do your homage, are you willing to do the same ?" And, as the King stands up and turns and shows himself four times to the assembled freemen, they " signify their willingness and joy by loud and repeated acclamations, all with one voice crying out, ' God Save King Edward.' "

And here I borrow from one <sup>1</sup> who touches as no

<sup>1</sup> H. S. Holland, D.D.



other living man can touch these dramatic solemnities of our national life (for I know he will consent to the borrowing), and I say that this is as noble as it is intelligible. "It embodies the splendid liberty with which a free people asserts its claim to have nothing imposed upon it in the dark, no tyrannous rule set over it which it has not measured and considered and acknowledged in the open light of Heaven." And then the whole great company falls to prayer, and the Archbishop, who has hitherto played his part as the first citizen of England and the greatest subject of the Crown, takes up a still higher function, and goes up, vested to the altar and begins the Service of the Eucharist, and, as a priest, invokes the supreme sanction of the Eternal. And then the majestic course of the rite is broken off in the very centre, and, with every act and feature and ceremony which can most forcibly express the solemnity of the transaction, the Archbishop demands of the King, in the face of God and the Church and the people, whether he will promise to rule England in due obedience to law and with sacred regard to Justice, Mercy, and Religion. And the King gives his promise, and, kneeling at the altar, confirms it with an oath upon the Holy Gospel.

"This free intercourse that passes between Ruler and Ruled is no child's play, no mere pretty ceremonial; it is the act of men in solemn earnest pledging their troth the one to the other. The

act is broad and deep and strong as the national life. It embodies the experience of centuries. It has in it the stern breath of conflict and the anxious determinations of secured peace. The Great Charter is behind it, and the memories of Runnymede and Whitehall. It seals a concentrated purpose. King and people look each other in the face, and speak their minds out and give their word." And then, and not till then, the Archbishop will go forward with his hallowing office and perform the symbolic acts, and pronounce the benediction of the Highest upon the covenant between King and Commonwealth. He anoints with the sacred unction and girds with the kingly sword. He delivers the sceptre of empire and the emblematic orb which, "set under the Cross," reminds the King "that the whole world is subject to the power and empire of Christ our Redeemer." And then the crown, of pure gold enriched with gems each one of which is a history, is set upon the Sovereign's head, and the Archbishop blesses and the onlookers acclaim.

"Blow, trumpets; all your exultations blow!"

as King Edward VII. takes his seat on the throne of the Confessor and the Conqueror, of the Plantagenets and the Tudors, and receives by the mouth of all that is greatest in Church and State the proud homage of a self-governing people.

And then, once again, the splendid trappings of

sovereignty are laid aside, and the King, uncrowned, kneels down like the lowliest son of Adam before the Mercy-seat of the Christian covenant, and the great action of the Eucharist is resumed, and the memories of the Upper Chamber at Jerusalem are renewed at the altar of Westminster. The Word is spoken and the Deed is done. A great cloud of prayer and aspiration and intercession floats up from the vast concourse of assembled worshippers ; and, in the midst of them, the crowned and anointed King, kneeling by her who must aid him to bear his burden, seeks through the Divinely-appointed Medium supernatural strength for a more than human task. From a full heart and with the solemnest intent a united nation says, "God save King Edward."

. . . . .

The scene is changed from Westminster Abbey to a dining-room in Belgravia, and the date from Saturday, 9th August, to Sunday, 3rd. Thirty guests, male and female, are gathered round a too-bountiful board ; and, amidst the rich fumes of mayonnaise and quails and whitebait and champagne-cup, there rise the mingled voices of the great "Coronation Chorus."

*Enthusiastic Young Lady.* "I can think of nothing but the Coronation. Where are you going to see it from?"

*Facetious Young Man.* "Oh! from Hurlingham. That's quite near enough. The whole thing is such a frightful bore. You know what they say London is just now. All Board and no Lodging."

*New Peeress.* "I really envy the duchesses. They have such good places in the front row. I shall be poked away under the gallery quite at the back. I don't believe I shall see a thing. But, after all, one will be able to say one has been there."

*Facetious Young Man.* "Oh! you could say that anyhow. It's not good enough to get up at four in the morning for the sake of saying that. Charley FitzBattleaxe thinks just the same as I do about it, but of course, as he's a peer, he's bound to go. He's a bad hand at getting up early, so he's going to sit up playing bridge all night, and then have his bath and go straight to the show."

*Stout Peeress.* "Our creation is rather old, so I have got a very good place, but the chairs are too dreadful. Such stiff backs, and only nine inches to sit on, and horrid wicker seats which will make marks on our velvet."

*Thrifty Peeress.* "Well, I really don't know where I shall have my luncheon. It seems monstrous to have to pay two guineas at the House of Lords for a sandwich and a glass of claret. The Watermans in Dean's Yard have most kindly asked me to go to luncheon with them, and it

would be an immense saving. But they are strict teetotallers, and I feel that, after all those hours in the Abbey, I shall want something more supporting than lemonade. So I am rather divided. I dread the idea of a teetotal luncheon, but two guineas for a glass of claret and a sandwich is rather much."

*Nervous Peeress.* "I am so terrified of being faint in the Abbey. I am going to take chocolate and meat lozenges in my coronet, and some brandy and water in my smelling-bottle."

*Chorus* (confusedly). "Oh no, port wine is the thing. No—rum and milk. My doctor says whisky. Whisky? Oh no; sal volatile is much the best, and Plasmon biscuits. Not sandwiches—I hate sandwiches. Cold chicken. But can we eat in church? Isn't it rather odd? Oh, the Abbey isn't exactly a church, you know. Isn't it? I should have thought it was. Well—no—our Vicar tells me that it was never consecrated. How very curious! At least it was only consecrated by the Angels, not by the Bishop. Well, of course that makes a difference. Still, I don't like the idea of eating and drinking in it. So I shall have some pâté de foie gras and champagne in the carriage, and eat till the very moment I get to the Abbey, and begin again the very moment I get out."

*Lively Young Lady.* "I'm not afraid of being faint—only of being bored in that long wait. I

shall take something to read while mamma is stuffing herself with her sandwiches."

*Facetious Young Man.* "What a good idea! Shall you take *Modern Society* or the *Pink 'Un*?"

*Grave Young Lady* (intervening). "Neither, I hope. People seem to forget that after all it is a religious service. If one must read, I think 'John Inglesant' or one of Miss Yonge's books would be more suitable than a newspaper."

*Lively Young Lady.* "Well, really, it is so difficult to think of it as a religious service. It seems to me more like a play. I saw one of the rehearsals, and certainly it was as funny as a pantomime. But still, of course, one wouldn't wish to do anything that was unsuitable; so I think I shall take a 'Guide-book to the Abbey' and learn all the history while we are waiting. One hears so much about it just now, and it seems stupid not to know. I never can remember whether St. Edward was Edward the Confessor or Edward the Sixth. Do you know?"

*Facetious Young Man.* "Oh, ask me an easier one. Those old jossers were all pretty much of a muchness. I tell you I'm not taking any. The whole thing is utterly out of date. Why couldn't he write his name in a book, or send a crier round with a bell to say he's come to the throne?"

*The Host.* "My dear Freddy Du Cane, I don't agree with you the least. I am bound to say quite honestly that all my life I have hoped that

I might live to see a Coronation, and I am honestly thankful that I have got a place. It is all the things that interest me most rolled into one—Pageant and History and Patriotism and a great Religious Ceremony. I am a Liberal ; therefore I like the Recognition and the Oath. I am a Ritualist ; therefore I like the vestments and the Unction and the oblation of the Golden Pall. Above all I am an Englishman, and I like to see my Sovereign take up the duties of sovereignty at the altar of 'that Royal and National sanctuary which has for so many centuries enshrined the varied memories of his august ancestors and the manifold glories of his free and famous kingdom.' Those words are Dean Stanley's. Do you know his account of the Coronation in his 'Memorials of Westminster Abbey' ? If you will let me, I will show it to you after luncheon. People ought at least to know what the service is before they presume to make stupid jokes about it."

CURTAIN.

## II

### SECRET SOCIETIES

WHEN Lord Scamperdale was angry with Mr. Sponge for riding over his hounds he called him "a perpendicular Puseyite pig-jobber"; and the alliteration was felt to emphasize the rebuke. If any Home Ruler is irritated by Sir Robert Anderson he may relieve his feelings by calling him a "preaching political policeman," and each word in the title will be true to life. Sir Robert combines in his single person the characters of barrister, detective, and theologian. He began life at the Irish Bar, was for many years head of the Criminal Investigation Department in London, then became Assistant Commissioner of Police, and all the while gave what leisure he could spare from tracking dynamiters and intercepting burglars to the composition of such works as "The Gospel and its Ministry," "A Handbook of Evangelical Truth," and "Daniel in the Critic's Den."

A career so diversified was sure to produce some interesting reminiscences, and the book<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Sidelights on the Home Rule Movement." By Sir Robert Anderson, K.C.B., LL.D.



which Sir Robert has just published is as full of mystery and adventure, violence and strategy, plot and counterplot, as the romances which thrilled our youth. In those days some boys thought soldiering the one life worth living ; some, in fancy, ran away to sea. Some loved tales of Piracy, and were peculiarly at home in a Smugglers' Cave. Others snatched a fearful joy from ghosts and bogies. Others enjoyed Brazilian forests and African jungles, hand-to-hand encounters with gorillas and hair-breadth 'scapes from watchful tigers. The present writer thought nothing so delightful as Secret Societies, and would have given his little all to know a password, a sign, or a secret code. Perhaps this idiosyncrasy was due to the fact that in the mid 'sixties every paper teemed with allusions to Fenianism, just then a very active force in the political world ; and to Smith Minus, in the Fourth Form at Harrow, there was something unspeakably attractive in the thought of being a " Head Centre," a " Director," or an " Executive Officer of the Irish Republican Brotherhood," or even in the paler glory of writing the mystic letters " F.B." or " C.O." after his undistinguished name. It is in his account of the earlier days of Fenianism that Sir Robert Anderson is so intensely interesting. He traces it, from its origin in the abortive rebellion of 1848 and that " Battle of Limerick " which Thackeray sang, to its formal inauguration in 1860, and its

subsequent activities at home and abroad; and the narrative begins, quite thrillingly, with the biography of the famous spy Henri le Caron, who played so striking a part before the Commission on Parnellism and Crime. Those who wish to learn these incidents in our recent history, or as much of them as at present can properly be disclosed, must read Sir Robert's book for themselves. I will not attempt even to epitomize it; and, indeed, I only mention it because of the "sidelights" which it throws, not on Home Rule, but on the part which Secret Societies have played in the fortunes of Modern Europe.

As far as I know, the only Englishman—if Englishman he could properly be called—who regarded the Secret Societies as formidable realities was Lord Beaconsfield. As long ago as 1844—long before he had official experience to guide him—he wrote, with regard to his favourite Sidonia (in drawing whom he drew himself):—

"The catalogue of his acquaintance in the shape of Greeks, Armenians, Moors, Secret Jews, Tartars, Gipsies, wandering Poles, and Carbonari would throw a curious light on those subterranean agencies of which the world in general knows so little, but which exercise so great an influence on public events."

Those were the days when Disraeli, a genius whom no one treated seriously, was uttering his inmost thoughts through the medium of romances

to which fancy contributed at least as much as fact. Then came twenty years of constant activity in politics—that pursuit which, as Bacon says, is of all pursuits “the most immersed in matter,”—and, when next he took up the novelist’s pen, he was a much older and more experienced, though he would scarcely be a wiser, man. In 1870 he startled the world with “Lothair”; and those who had the hardihood to fight their way through all the fashionable flummery with which the book begins found in the second and third volumes a profoundly interesting contribution to the history of Europe between 1848 and 1868. One of the characters says that “the only strong things in Europe are the Church and the Secret Societies”; and the book is a vivid narrative of the struggle for life and death between the Temporal Power of the Papacy and the insurrectionary movements inspired by Garibaldi. Every chapter of the book contains a portrait, and every incident is drawn from something which had come under the author’s notice between 1866 and 1869, when he was the leading personage in the Tory Government and the Fenians were making open and secret war on English rule. He was describing the men whom he knew and the things which he had seen, and this fact makes the book so extraordinarily vivid, and won for it Froude’s enthusiastic praise. Every one could recognize Capel and Manning and Antonelli and Lord Bute, and all their diplomatic and fashionable

allies ; it required some knowledge of the insurrectionary movements to see in " Captain Bruges " a portrait of General Cluseret, commander-in-chief of every insurgent army in Europe or America, or in Theodora the noble character of Jessie White-Mario, whose career of romantic devotion to the cause of Freedom closed only in this year.<sup>1</sup>

" Madre Natura " in Italy, Fenianism in America and England, the " Mary Anne " Societies of France, and the mysterious alliance between all these subterranean forces, are the themes of " Lothair," and the State trials of the time throw a good deal of light upon them all. Even more mysterious, much harder to trace, and infinitely more enduring were the operations of the Carbonari—beginning with a handful of charcoal-burners in the forests of Northern Italy, and spreading thence, always by woodland ways, to the centre and north of Europe. They promoted the French revolutions of 1830 and 1848. Even Louis Napoleon allied himself with them in his earlier machinations against Louis Philippe and the Republic ; and in the Franco-German War of 1870 they rendered incalculable service to the German troops by guiding them through the fastnesses of the Ardennes. It is one of the characteristics of the Secret Societies that they attack the established order, without, apparently, caring much what that order represents. Their generals fought against England in

<sup>1</sup> 1906.

Canada and in Ireland; against the Northern States in America; against Russia in the Danubian Principalities. It is not to be supposed that in 1870 the Carbonari had much sympathy with the military absolutism of Prussia; but Prussia was attacking the French Empire, and that was enough for the Carbonari.

Of course, as a general rule, the Secret Societies of the Continent were anti-monarchical and anti-Christian; but he who loves these mysterious combinations can find plenty to interest him in the history of organizations which were neither Republican nor Atheistic. Nothing could be more devotedly monarchical and orthodox than the "Cycle of the White Rose." This Society, profoundly "secret," was founded about the year 1727. It had for its object to unite all the Cavalier and Nonjuring families of North Wales and Cheshire, with a view to concerted action when next the exiled Stuarts should claim their own. The headquarters were always at Wynnstay, and the Lady of Wynnstay was always Patroness. The badge was a White Rose in enamel, and the list of members was printed in a circle, so that if it should fall into the hands of Government no one should appear as ringleader or chief. The Cycle was for some fifty years a real and definite organization for political ends; but, as years went on and the hopes of the Jacobites perished, the Cycle degenerated into a mere dining-club, and

it expired in 1850. Its last member was, I believe, the Rev. Sir Theophilus Puleston, who lived to see the second Jubilee of Queen Victoria ; and the last Lady Patroness died in 1905.

Another Secret Society which once meant practical mischief of no common kind was that of the Orangemen. Though Orangemen are nowadays vociferously loyal, their forerunners are grossly misrepresented if it is not true that, under the Grand-mastership of the Duke of Cumberland, afterwards King Ernest of Hanover, they organized a treasonable conspiracy to prevent Queen Victoria from succeeding to the Throne of her ancestors and to put her uncle in her place. For sidelights on this rather dark passage of modern history the curious reader is referred to "Tales of my Father," by "A. M. F.," and to a sensational rendering of the same story, called "God Save the Queen."

My space is failing, and I must forbear to enlarge on the most familiar and least terrifying of all "Secret Societies." I hold no brief for the "Grand Orient of France," even though Pius IX. may once have belonged to this or a similar organization ; but I must profess that English Freemasons are the most respectable, most jovial, and most benevolent of mankind ; and I trust that they will accept in its true intention Cardinal Manning's ambiguously worded defence of their craft, "English Freemasonry is a Goose Club."

### III

#### THE IRISH PEERAGE

DRYASDUST is proverbially a bore, and his forms are Protean. Thus there are the Jacobite Dryasdusts, who affirm that Queen Victoria had no higher dignity than that of Dowager Princess Albert of Saxe-Coburg, and deny that any act of sovereignty transacted in this country has been valid since that dark morning when James II., making the best of his way to the Old Kent Road, dropped the Great Seal into the Thames. Then there are the Constitutional Dryasdusts, who deny the existence of a Cabinet or a Prime Minister, and insist that the Privy Council is the only Ministerial body known to the law; and the Ecclesiastical Dryasdusts, who affirm that the Church of England is really free because the bishops are freely elected by the Chapters of their respective Cathedrals, acting under licence from a Sovereign who, having been anointed, is a *Persona Mixta*—part layman, part ecclesiastic. At the height of the South African War I chanced to meet an Heraldic Dryasdust, who moaned like a mandrake over the announcement that the Duke of Norfolk had just

set out, with his Yeomanry, for the scene of action. "You mean," I said, "that a valuable life is needlessly imperilled?" "Not at all," replied Dryasdust, with a face as long as a fiddle-case. "A far more important consideration than the Duke's life is involved. As Earl-Marshal he is supreme commander of the forces of the Crown when engaged in actual warfare, and the moment he sets his foot on African soil Lord Roberts becomes subject to his command. There is no way out of that constitutional necessity, and I regard the outlook as very serious." And so indeed it would have been, had Dryasdust been right.

I am led to this train of reflections by the fact that an eminent genealogist has lately tried to frighten the readers of a Sunday paper by broaching the theory that all the Acts of Parliament passed within the last twenty years may have been invalid. He does not commit himself to the statement that they are invalid, but he insists that they may be, and he grounds his contention on a clause of the Act of Union. Concerning this clause he says, following Sir William Anson, that it requires that "the number of Irish peers, not entitled by the possession of other peerages to an hereditary seat in the House of Lords of the United Kingdom, shall never fall below one hundred." Now it seems that during the last twenty years the number has fallen below a hundred; therefore the House of Lords has not been properly constituted, and



therefore its part in legislation has been null and void. It is a startling theory, and like most startling theories, will probably turn out to be nonsense ; but the history of the Irish Peerage, apart from any consequences which may be deduced from it, is full of interest, and not wholly free from scandal. The Irish peerage, as it stands to-day, comprises 175 members ; of these, 28 sit in the House of Lords as Representative Peers, elected for life by their brethren ; 82 sit there because they hold English as well as Irish peerages ; and the remainder, being merely Irish peers and not Representatives, do not sit in the House of Lords, but are eligible for the House of Commons. In this respect their state is more gracious than that of the Scotch peers, who cannot be elected to the House of Commons, and therefore, unless they can get themselves chosen to be Representative Peers of Scotland, are excluded from Parliament for ever. Still, though a seat in the House of Lords is a desirable possession, a mere title has its charms.

It used to be said that when Mr. Smith the banker, who lived in Whitehall, asked George III. for the *entrée* of the Horse Guards, the King replied, "I can't do that ; but I wish to make you an Irish Peer." However, the true version of the story seems to be that which is given in the "Life of the Marquis of Granby."

"In 1787 the owner of Rutland House desired to increase the private *entrée* into Hyde Park to the

dimensions of a carriage entrance, and asked Charles, fourth Duke of Rutland, to support the necessary application to the King. The Duke, who was then Viceroy of Ireland, replied, 'You will let me know whether ye application is to be made to Lord Orford, who is ye Ranger of ye Park, or to ye King himself: in ye latter case I would write to Lord Sydney att ye same time ; if it be to the King a greater object might be easier accomplished than this trifle, as I know he is very particular about his Parks ; at least he is so about St. James Park, for he made a man an Irish Peer to keep him in Good Humour for having refused him permission to drive his carriage through ye Horse Guards.' "

Lord Palmerston, himself an Irish peer, used to say that an Irish peerage was the most convenient of all dignities, as it secured its owner social precedence while it left him free to pursue a Parliamentary career. At the same time, greatly as he enjoyed his position, Palmerston never would take the oaths or comply with the legal formalities necessary to entitle him to vote for the Irish Representative Peers ; and the reason for this refusal was characteristic alike of an adroit politician and of the unscrupulous age in which he lived. An Irish peer who has proved his right to vote for the Representative Peers, is eligible for election as a Representative, and Palmerston feared that his political opponents, wishing to get him out of the

House of Commons into the comparative obscurity and impotence of the House of Lords, would elect him a Representative Peer in spite of himself, and so effectually terminate his political activities. In the days immediately succeeding Palmerston a conspicuous ornament of the Irish Peerage was the second Marquis of Abercorn. He had no need to trouble himself about Representative arrangements, for he sat in the House of Lords as a peer of Great Britain, but his hereditary connexion with the North of Ireland, his great estates there, and the political influence which they gave him, made him, in a very real sense, an Irish peer. He was Lord-Lieutenant from 1866 to 1868, and during his viceroyalty Disraeli (who subsequently drew his portrait in "Lothair") conferred upon him the rare honour of an Irish dukedom. It was rumoured that he wished, in consideration of his 80,000 acres in Tyrone and Donegal, to become the Duke of Ulster, but was reminded that Ulster was a Royal title, borne already by the Duke of Edinburgh. Be that as it may, he stuck to his Scotch title, and became Duke of Abercorn. Down to that time the Duke of Leinster had been the sole Irish duke, and went by the nickname of "Ireland's Only." To him, as an old friend, the newly created Duke of Abercorn wrote a mock apology for having invaded his monopoly; but the Duke of Leinster was equal to the occasion, and wrote back that he was quite content to be

henceforward the Premier Duke of Ireland. When, six months later, Disraeli was driven out of office, he conferred an Irish barony on a faithful supporter, Colonel M'Clintock, who was made Lord Rathdonnell; and it was generally understood that, by arrangement between the leaders on both sides, no more Irish peerages were to be created. This understanding held good till Mr. George Curzon, proceeding to India as Viceroy and contemplating a possible return to Parliament when his term of office expired, persuaded Lord Salisbury to make him Lord Curzon of Kedleston in the Peerage of Ireland.

But, after all, the Irish Peerage of to-day is to a great extent the product of the Irish Union. "There is no crime recorded in history—I do not except the Massacre of St. Bartholomew—which will compare for a moment with the means by which the Union was carried." The student of men and moods, having no clue to guide him, would probably attribute this outburst to Mr. Gladstone at some period between his first and second Home Rule Bills; and he would be right. For my own part, I can scarcely follow the allusion to St. Bartholomew, but beyond doubt the measures employed by the English Government in order to secure the Union were both cruel and base. It is the baseness with which we are just now concerned. In order to carry the Union it was necessary to persuade the Irish Houses of

Lords and Commons, and to capture the whole machinery of bribery and terrorism which directed the Irish Parliament. As that blameless publicist Sir T. Erskine May tranquilly observes, "corrupt interests could only be overcome by corruption." The policy of out-corrupting the corruptest was pursued with energy and resolution. Each patron of Irish boroughs who was ready to part with them received £7500 for each seat. Lord Downshire got £52,000 for seven seats; Lord Ely £45,000 for six. The total amount paid in compensation for the surrender of electoral powers was £1,260,000. In addition to these pecuniary inducements, honours were lavishly distributed as bribes. Five Irish peers were called to the House of Lords, twenty were advanced a step in the peerage, and twenty-two new peers were created. It would be invidious, and perhaps actionable, to attach proper names to the amazing histories of Corruption by Title which are narrated in the Private Correspondence of the Viceroy, Lord Cornwallis, and the published Memoirs of Sir Jonah Barrington. Even that sound loyalist Mr. Lecky was constrained to admit that "the majority of Irish titles are historically connected with memories not of honour but of shame." On the 22nd January 1799 one member of the Irish House of Commons took his bribe in the brief interval between his speech for, and his vote against a resolution affirming the right of the Irish nation

to an independent Legislature. Another aspirant to the peerage "made and sang songs against the Union in 1799, and made and sang songs for it in 1800." He got his deserts. A third secured £30,000 for his surrendered boroughs, a peerage for himself, and for his brother in Holy Orders an archbishopric so wealthy that its fortunate owner became a peer, and subsequently an earl, on his own account. The scandalous tale might be indefinitely prolonged ; but enough has been said to show why it is difficult to shed tears when these strangely-engendered peerages sink below the prescribed number of a hundred.

## IV

### OMITTED SILHOUETTES

LAST year<sup>1</sup> I ventured to submit for public inspection a small collection of Social Silhouettes. From time to time during the last few months I have received several kind enquiries about Omitted Portraits. For instance, there is the Undertaker. Perhaps a friend will write: "Dickens made capital fun out of Mr. Mould and the 'Hollow *Elm* Tree.' Couldn't you try your hand at something of the same kind?" Another writes, perhaps a little bluntly: "Why don't you give us the Barrister? He must be an awfully easy type to do." A third says, with subtler tact: "I feel that, since Thackeray left us, yours is the only pen which can properly handle the Actor"—or the Painter, or the Singer, or the Bellringer, or the Beadle, as the case may be. Now, to these enquiries, conceived, as I know them all to be, in the friendliest spirit, my answer varies a little, according to the type suggested. With regard to the Barrister, I stated quite early in my series that I did not propose to deal with him, because he had been drawn

<sup>1</sup> 1906.

repeatedly by the master-hands of fiction, and because the lapse of years had wrought so little change in the type that Serjeant Snubbin, and Fitz-Roy Timmins, and Sir Thomas Underwood, and Mr. Furnival, and Mr. Chaffanbrass were portraits which needed no retouching. I must, indeed, admit that the growth of hair upon the chin and upper lip is a marked departure from type, and that a moustached K.C. is as abnormal a being as a bearded woman or a three-headed nightingale ; but the variation is purely external, and the true inwardness of the Barrister remains what it was when Dickens and Thackeray and Trollope drew him. So, again, with regard to the Family Solicitor ; as long as men can study the methods of Mr. Tulkinghorn (of Lincoln's Inn Fields) and Mr. Putney Giles (of the same learned quarter) they may leave Mr. Jerome K. Jerome in undisturbed possession of his stage-lawyer, who " dresses in the costume of the last generation but seven, never has any office of his own, and (with the aid of a crimson bag) transacts all his business at his clients' houses."

When I am asked why I do not describe the Painter, my reply is partly the same. We have got Gaston Phœbus, and Clive Newcome, and Claude Mellot, and the goodly company of Trilby, and we shall not easily improve upon those portraits, whether highly finished or merely sketched. But in this case I have another reason for reticence.



I know a good many painters, who about this time of year bid me to their studios. I have experienced before now the delicate irritability of the artistic genius, and I know that a reverential reticence is my safest course. Conversely, my reason for not describing the Actor is that I really do not know him well enough. An actor off the stage is about as exhilarating an object as a theatre by daylight. The brilliancy and the glamour have departed; the savour of sawdust and orange-peel remains. Let us render all honour to the histrion when his foot is on his native boards; but if we are wise we shall eschew in private life the society of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Crummies, nor open our door too widely to the tribe of Costigan and Fotheringay.

The mention of that great actress's name (for did not Emily Costigan, afterwards Lady Mirabel, figure as "Miss Fotheringay" on the provincial stage?) reminds me that, according to some of my critics, women played too rare and too secluded a part in my series of "Typical Developments." It is only too true, and no one knows as well as the author the amount of brilliancy and interest which has been forfeited thereby. But really it is a sacred awe that has made me mute. Even to-day, as I write, I am smarting under a rebuke recently administered to me, at a public gathering, by an outraged matron. This lady belongs to the political section of her tribe; holds man, poor man! in proper contempt; and

clamours on Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's doorstep for that suffrage which is to make her truly free. At present she esteems herself little better than a Squaw, and has been heard to declare, in moments of expansive eloquence, that she was not created to be the Toy of Man—a declaration in which her hearers most heartily concurred. Well, this stern guardian of her sex's rights recently took me to task in a public place for the levity with which I had criticized a gathering of political ladies, and my nerve has scarcely rallied from the sudden onslaught. Had I been more myself I might even yet have tried my unskilled hand at female portraiture. Perhaps, in the spirit of that Cambridge professor who calls William II. "quite the nicest Emperor I know," I might have begun in the most illustrious circles, and have sketched the stone-laying and bazaar-opening activities of Royal Princesses. Or, yielding precedence to the Church, I might have discoursed of Episcopal ladies and have traced the influence of a tradition received from the beatified Mrs. Proudie. "*We* had a very nice Ordination this Trinity," says one lady of this class. "The Bishop and I were much disappointed by the poor response of the laity to our appeal," wrote another. When in May 1899 the Archbishops were playing at a Court for the trial of Ritualism, Episcopal ladies sate knitting by the judgment-seat, and stared at the incrimi-

nated clergymen, as the *tricoteuses* of the French Revolution may have stared at the victims of the guillotine, or as Miss Squeers peered through the keyhole at the flagellation of Smike. Or again, on a lowlier rung of the Ecclesiastical ladder, I might have drawn the Parochial Worker—the woman of waterproof and gingham, the distributor of tracts, the disciplinarian of the Sunday School, the presiding spirit of Mothers' Meetings. At a General Election this type of lady varies her activities—canvasses for the Conservative candidate, and tells the gaping washerwomen that Mr. Lloyd-George wishes to convert the Welsh cathedrals into music-halls for the Eisteddfod. Of all Parochial Workers the highest type is the Deaconess; and not long ago, in a parish with which I am conversant, the Deaconess and the Curate used to do their parochial rounds on a double bicycle, to the infinite amusement of the gutter-children and the serious perturbation of the severely orthodox. There was a picture worthy of the pen and pencil of Thackeray, but it faded all too soon into the blurred commonplace of matrimony.

The Deaconess may be called the Marine of the Church's army, with one foot on sea and one on shore—only half a Worldling, yet not quite a Nun. With ladies of the last-named type, my acquaintance has been prolonged and intimate. Of their excellence and devotion it would be im-

pertinent to speak ; but I may say without offence that some of the ablest, most agreeable, and most amusing women I have known I have encountered in the Cloister. But, alas ! even into the Cloister the serpent of political guile will wend his sinuous way ; nor could I, though her friend, commend the action of Sister G—— M—— when, in order to prevent a patient in a Convalescent Home from voting for a Radical candidate, she kept his trousers under lock and key till the poll was over.

“Old age,” it has been bitterly said, “when it can no longer set a bad example, gives good advice ;” and when, as sometimes happens, I am asked to hortate my younger fellow-citizens, one of my most emphatic lessons is a Reverence for Womanhood, even in its least ideal aspects. This, I declare to be an essential attribute of the ideal character—of that manhood, at once beautiful and good, to which the philosophers have taught us to aspire ; and, lest I should seem to be violating my own oft-repeated precept, I tear myself from a fascinating theme.

## V

### DOCTORS AND DOCTORING

SYDNEY SMITH, who was fond of quacking his parishioners, and had a poor opinion of "professional and graduated homicides," observes that "the Sixth Commandment is suspended by one medical diploma from the North of England to the South." Personally, I have experienced the attentions of the Faculty north, south, east, and west, and I began in London. In my first appearance on this planet I was personally conducted by a smart gentleman, who came straight from a dinner-party, in a large white cravat and turquoise studs. Those studs still exist, and have descended, with the practice, to his grandson. May they beam on births more propitious than my own.

My knowledge of the first act of life's drama is necessarily traditional. But, as I approach the second, memory begins to operate. I seem to remember a black silhouette of a gentleman in an elbow-chair, with a pigtail and knee-breeches; and this icon was revered as the likeness of "old Doctor P——." This "old Dr. P.'s" son, "Tom P——," was a sturdy stripling of seventy odd,

who had never used a stethoscope, and dismissed a rival practitioner who talked about heart-sounds as "an alarmist." To these succeeded a third generation of the same drug-stained dynasty, represented to me by a gentleman in shiny black, who produced a large gold watch when he felt one's pulse, and said "Hah!" when he looked at one's tongue. These three generations, for something more than a century, monopolized all the best practice of Loamshire, were immensely respected, and accumulated a great deal of money. Echoes of the dialogue between doctor and patient still haunt the ear of memory:—

*Nervous and Dyspeptic Lady.* "Do you know, Dr. P., I felt so very uncomfortable after luncheon—quite a sensation of sinking through the floor. Of course I had some brandy and water—about half and half—at once, but I feel that I ought to have a little champagne at dinner. Nothing helps me so much."

*Dr. P.* "Your ladyship is no inconsiderable physician. I was about to make the same suggestion. But pray be careful that it is a dry wine."

All this was very comfortable and friendly, and tended to promote the best relations between doctor and patient. I do not recollect that the doctor was supposed to effect cures; but his presence at a deathbed created the pleasant sense that all had been done which could be done, and that the patient was dying with the dignity proper

to his station. It may be remarked, in passing, that the two elder generations did all their rounds, early and late, summer and winter, on horseback ; while the third subsided into a brougham drawn by a pair of horses afflicted with stringhalt, and presumably bought cheap on account of that infirmity.

So much for the men. What was their method ? To my infant palate the oils of castor and cod were as familiar as mother's milk. I dwelt in a land flowing with rhubarb and magnesia. The lively leech was a household pet. "Two nocturnes in blue and an arrangement in black," as the *Æsthete* said, were of frequent occurrence. But other parts of the system were more palatable. I seem to have drunk beer from my earliest infancy. A glass of port wine at eleven, with a teaspoonful of bark in it, was the recognized tonic, and brandy (which the doctor, who loved periphrasis, always called "the domestic stimulant") was administered whenever one looked squeamish, while mulled claret was "exhibited" as a soporific. The notion of pouring all this stuff down a child's throat sounds odd to a generation reared on Apollinaris and barley-water, but it had this one advantage—that when one grew up it was impossible to make one drunk.

From childhood we pass on to schooldays. Wild horses should not drag from me the name of the seminary where I was educated, for its

medical arrangements left a good deal to be desired. There were three doctors in this place, and they shared the care of some six hundred boys. Dr. A. was certainly very old, and was reputed to be very good, insomuch that his admirers said that, if they were dying, they should wish to have Dr. A. with them, as he was better than any clergyman. If, however, they were so carnally-minded as to wish to recover, they sent for Dr. B., a bluff gentleman, who told his patients that they were not half as ill as they thought, and must pull themselves together—a prescription which, if there was nothing the matter, answered admirably. The third was a grievous gentleman, who took a dark view of life, and, sitting by my sick-bed, would inform me of the precarious condition of a schoolfellow, who, to use his own phrase, was “slipping through his fingers,” and “had no more constitution than a fly.” Regarding this triumvirate in the light of my subsequent experience, I cannot affect surprise that there were fifteen deaths among the boys during the five years that I was in the school.

From the anonymous school I proceeded to an anonymous university, where the medical world was dominated by the bland majesty of Sir Omicron Pie (the name is Trollope’s, but it will serve). Who that ever saw them can forget that stately bearing, that Jove-like brow, that sublime air of omniscience and omnipotence? Who that ever heard it, that even flow of mellifluous eloquence and copious



narrative? Who that ever experienced it, the underlying kindness of heart?

A nervous undergraduate is ushered into the consulting-room, and the great man advances with a paternal smile.

“Mr. Bumpstead? Ah! I think I was at school with your good father. No? Then it must have been your uncle. You are very like him. We ran a neck-and-neck race at the University. I won the Gold Medal, and he was *proximè*. In those days I little thought of settling down in Oxbridge. I had destined myself for a London practice; but Sir Thomas Watson—you have heard of ‘Watson’s style’? He was the Cicero of Medicine—well, Watson said, ‘No, my dear Pie, it won’t do. In ten years you will be at the head of the profession, and will have made £100,000. But, mark my words, *the blade will wear out the scabbard*. You are not justified in risking your life.’ I was disappointed, of course. All young men like the idea of fame. But I saw that Watson was right, and I came here, and found my life’s work. The Medical School was then in a very decayed condition, and I have made it what it is. Why am I telling you all this——?”

(*Enter the butler.*) “Please, Sir Omicron, you’ve an appointment at Battle-axe Castle at four o’clock, and the carriage is at the door.”

*Sir O. P.* “Ah! well. I must tell you the rest another day. Let me see, what was the

matter? Palpitation? Let me listen for a moment. It is as I thought—only a little functional irritability. Lead a sensible life; avoid excess; cultivate the philosophic temper. Take this prescription, and come again next week. Thank you, thank you.”

Fortified by four years of Sir Omicron's care, I came up to London somewhere between 1870 and 1880. The practice of the West End was then divided between three men—Sir A. B., Sir C. D., and Sir E. F.

Sir A. B. was bluff and brutal, fashioned himself on the traditions of Abernethy, and ruled his patients by sheer terrorism. He had an immense influence over hysterical women and weak-minded men, and people who might otherwise have resented his ursine manner were reconciled to it by the knowledge that he officially inspected the most illustrious Tongue in the kingdom.

His principal rival was Sir C. D., who ruled by love. “Well, my dear sir, there is not much the matter. A day or two's hunting will set you right. You don't ride? Ah! well, it doesn't much matter. A fortnight at Monte Carlo will do just as well. All you want is change of scene and plenty of amusement.”

“As to your ladyship's diet, it should be light and nutritious. I should recommend you to avoid beefsteaks and boiled mutton. A little turtle soup, some devilled whitebait, and a slice of a turkey

*truffe* would be the sort of dinner to suit you. If the insomnia is at all urgent, I have found a light supper of *pâté de foie gras* work wonders."

Sir E. F. operated on a theological system. His discourse on the Relations between Natural and Revealed Religion profoundly impressed those who heard it for the first time, and his tractate on Medical Missions in India ran into a third edition. In his waiting-room one found, instead of last month's *Punch* or the Christmas number of *Madame*, devotional works inscribed "From his grateful patient, the author." In his consulting-room a sacred picture of large dimensions crowned the mantelpiece, and signed portraits of bishops whom he had delivered from dyspepsia adorned the walls. Ritualistic clergy frequented him in great numbers, and—what was better still—recommended their congregations to the "beloved physician." Ecclesiastically-minded laymen delighted in him, and came away with a comfortable conviction, syllogistically arranged, that (1) one's first duty is to maintain one's health ; (2) whatever one likes is healthy ; therefore (3) one's first duty is to like exactly as one likes.

A water-drinking adherent of Mr. Gladstone once saw that eminent man crowning a banquet of champagne with a glass of undeniable port. "Oh ! Mr. Gladstone," he exclaimed in the bitterness of his soul, "what would Sir E. F. say if he could see you mixing your liquors ?" The great man's

defence was ready to his hand : " Sir E. F. assures me that, if I let fifteen minutes elapse between two kinds of wine, there is no mixture."

Somehow these lively oracles of Sir E. F.'s, with which I was always coming in contact, left on my mind a dim impression that he must have been related to the doctor who attended Little Nell and prescribed the remedies which the landlady had already applied : " Everybody said he was a very shrewd doctor indeed, and knew perfectly well what people's constitutions were, which there appears some reason to suppose he did."

## VI

### MOURNING

MY infant mind was "suckled in a creed outworn," in the form of a book called, by a strange misnomer, a "Book of Useful Knowledge." It was there stated, if my memory serves me, that "the Chinese mourn in yellow, but Kings and Cardinals mourn in purple." In what do modern English people mourn? That is the subject of to-day's enquiry.

Lord Acton, in one of his most impressive passages, speaks of England as living under "institutions which incorporate tradition and prolong the reign of the dead." But the very notion of "prolonging the reign of the dead" is an anachronism in an age which forgets its friends the moment it has buried them. "Out of sight, out of mind" is an adage which nowadays verifies itself with startling rapidity. Mourning is as much out of date as Suttee; and, as to the Widow's Cap, the admirable Signora Vesey Neroni in "Barchester Towers" was only a little in advance of her age when she exclaimed, "The death of twenty husbands should not make me undergo such a penance.

It is as much a relic of paganism as the sacrifice of a Hindoo woman at the burning of her husband's body. If not so bloody, it is quite as barbarous and quite as useless."

In days gone by, a death in a family extinguished all festivity. Engagements were cancelled, social plans were laid aside, and the mourners went into retreat for a twelvemonth. Men wore black trousers; women swathed themselves in black crape. "Mourning Jewellery"—hideous combinations of jet and bogwood—twinkled and jingled round the necks of the bereaved, and widows wrote on letter-paper which was virtually black, with a small white space in the middle of the sheet. Harry Foker, we know, honoured his father's memory by having his brougham painted black; and I have known a lady who, when she lost her husband, had her boudoir lined with black velvet, after the fashion of Lord Glenallan in "The Antiquary."

But nowadays people shrink (with amiable considerateness) from thus inflicting their griefs on their friends; and if (as we must in charity assume) they feel emotion, they studiously conceal it in their own bosoms. The ball follows the funeral with a celerity and a frank joyousness which suggest a Wake; and the keen pursuers of pleasure protest, with quite a religious air, that for their own part they would think it absolutely wicked to sorrow as those without hope. Weedless widows, becomingly "gowned," as Ladies' Papers say, in

pale grey or black and white, sacrifice to propriety by forswearing the Opera or the Racecourse for twelve months or so, but find a little fresh air on the River or at Hurlingham absolutely necessary for health ; and, if they dine out quietly or even give a little dance at home, are careful to protest that they have lost all pleasure in life, but must struggle to keep up for the sake of the dear children. Surely, as Master Shallow says, " good phrases are, and ever were, very commendable." The old-fashioned manifestations of mourning were no doubt overdone, but the modern disregard of the dead seems to me both heartless and indecent.

The supreme exemplar of Mourning was, of course, Queen Victoria. During her reign, and in her personal practice, the custom of Mourning reached its highest point of persistence and solemnity. In 1844 Lady Lyttelton, who was governess to the present King and his sister the Princess Royal, wrote from Court, " We are such a ' boundless contiguity of shade ' just now." The immediate cause of that shade was the death of Prince Albert's father ; and although in Queen Victoria's life there was a fair allowance of sunshine, still, as Ecclesiastes said, " the clouds return after the rain " ; and, in a family where cousinship is recognized to the third and fourth generation, the " shade " of mourning must constantly recur. The late Duke of Beaufort, head of the most numerous family in the Peerage, always wore a black band

round his white hat, because, as he said, one of his cousins was always dead and he would not be wanting in respect for the deceased ; and, similarly, a Maid of Honour once said to me, "I never see the Queen's jewels, because she is almost always in mourning for some German prince or princess, and then she only wears black ornaments." Of course, in a case where there was this natural predisposition to mournful observance, the supreme loss of a husband meant a final renunciation of the world and its gaieties. I suppose it is no exaggeration to say that from her bereavement in 1861 to her death in 1901 Queen Victoria lived in unbroken communion with the unseen but unforgotten. The necessary business of the State was not, even for a week, laid aside ; but poms and ceremonies and public appearances are profoundly distasteful to shattered nerves and broken hearts. Yielding to the urgent advice of her Ministers, Queen Victoria emerged from four years' seclusion to open the new Parliament in 1866 ; and her reward was reaped in the following December, when a peculiarly rancorous politician rebuked her at a great meeting of reformers in St. James's Hall for a lack of popular sympathies. It was then that, on the spur of the moment, John Bright, who himself had known so well what bereavement meant, uttered his chivalrous defence of the absent and lonely Sovereign :—

"I am not accustomed to stand up in defence



of those who are possessors of crowns. But I could not sit and hear that observation without a sensation of wonder and of pain. I think there has been, by many persons, a great injustice done to the Queen in reference to her desolate and widowed position. And I venture to say this—that a woman, be she the Queen of a great realm or be she the wife of one of your labouring men, who can keep alive in her heart a great sorrow for the lost object of her life and affection, is not at all likely to be wanting in a great and generous sympathy with you.”

Admirable and reverend as was this abiding sorrow, contemporary observers felt that its outward manifestations were not always harmonious. The Mausoleum at Frogmore is not a “poem in stone,” and the Monument of Gilt opposite the Albert Hall has supplied the frivolous with an appropriate pun. Landseer, who, when once he forsook his stags and deerhounds, was surely the most debased painter of a hideous age, attained his worst in a picture of the Slopes at Windsor *circa* 1862. Under an inky sky, in the forefront of a sunless landscape, stands a black pony, and on its back is a lady dressed in the deepest weeds, with a black riding-skirt and a black bonnet. A retainer in subfusc kilt holds the pony’s head, a dingy terrier looks on with melancholy eyes, and, in the distant background, two darkly-clad princesses shiver on a garden-seat. The only spot of colour

in the scene is a red despatch-box, and the whole forms the highest tribute of English art to a national disaster and a Queenly sorrow.

Black, and intensely black, were all the trappings of courtly woe—black crape, black gloves, black feathers, black jewellery. The State-robcs were worn no longer ; the State-coach stood unused in the coach-house. The footmen wore black bands round their arms. It was only by slow degrees, and on occasions of high and rare solemnity, that white lace and modest plumes and diamonds and decorations were permitted to enliven the firmament of courtly woe. But we of the twentieth century live in an age of æsthetic revival, and, though perhaps we do not mourn so heartily, we certainly mourn more prettily. One lady at least there is who knows how to combine the sincerity of sorrow with its becoming manifestation ; and Queen Alexandra in mourning garb is as delightful a vision as was Queen Alexandra in her clothing of wrought gold, when she knelt before the altar of Westminster Abbey and bowed her head to receive her diamond crown.

Queen Victoria's devotion to the memory of those whom she had lost had one definite consequence which probably she little contemplated. The annual service, conducted in the Royal Mausoleum at Frogmore on the anniversary of the Prince Consort's death, accustomed English people to the idea, which since the Reformation had

become strangely unfamiliar, of devotional commemoration of the Departed. To the Queen's religious instincts, deeply tinged as they had been by Prince Albert's Lutheranism, such commemorations were entirely natural; for German Protestantism has always cherished a much livelier sense of the relation between the living and the departed than was realized by English Puritanism. The example set in high quarters quickly spread. Memorial Services became an established form of English mourning. Beginning with simple prayers and hymns, they gradually developed into Memorial Eucharists. The splendid, wailing music of the *Dies Iræ* was felt to be the Christian echo of the *Domine, Refugium*; and the common instinct of mourning humanity found its appropriate expression when, over the coffin of Prince Henry of Battenberg, the choir of St. George's Chapel sang the Russian hymn of supplication, "Give rest, O Christ, to Thy servant with Thy Saints."

## VII

### WILLS

IF there is any one still left who knows his "Christian Year," he will remember that Keble extolled "a sober standard of feeling" as a special virtue of the English Prayer-book. I have always thought that this "sober standard" is peculiarly well exemplified by the rubric about Will-making in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick: "If the sick person hath not before disposed of his goods, let him then be admonished to make his Will and to declare his Debts, what he oweth and what is owing unto him, for the better discharging of his conscience and the quietness of his Executors. But men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates whilst they are in health." There is something in these directions which is curiously English and commonplace and unrhapsodical, and therefore exactly congruous with the temper of a people who have never set a high value on unpractical religions. To this general duty of Will-making there may, of course, be exceptions. Thus Dr. Pusey in his old age, when his family was reduced to one and he

had no possessions left except his books, said : "In a case like mine, the Law is the best will-maker." A pietistic admirer, who had caught the words imperfectly, in relating them substituted "Lord" for "Law" ; but the substitution did not really affect the sense. In cases where no great interests are involved and the requirements of justice are not altogether clear, we can wisely leave the eventual fate of our possessions to "God's scheme for governing the Universe, by men mis-called Chance."

There is, I believe, a certain school of economic reformers who would wholly abolish the prerogative of Will-making, and would decree that whatever a man leaves behind him should pass automatically to his children, or, failing them, to the State. On the social and fiscal results of such a system I forbear to speculate ; but, as a sincere friend to Literature in all its branches, I would ask, if that were law, what would become of the Novelists and the Playwrights ? The law of Stage-land has been codified for us by the laborious care of Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, and among its best-established principles seem to be these : If a man dies without leaving a will, then all his property goes to the nearest villain ; but, if a man dies and leaves a will, then all his property goes to whoever can get possession of that will. Here are the raw materials of dramatic litigation enough to hold the Stage for a century ; and ill would it fare with the

embarrassed playwright if a mechanical process of law were substituted for the strange possibilities of Will-making, with its startling caprices, its incalculable miscarriages, and its eventual triumph of injured innocence. Then again, as to Fiction. Foul fall the day when our fiction-writers shall be unable to traffic any longer in testamentary mystification. How would their predecessors have fared if they had laboured under such a disability? I am by nature too cautious to "intromit with" the mysteries of Scotch law, and in the romances of the beloved Sir Walter the complications of Entail and of Will-making are curiously intertwined. Certainly it was under the provisions of an entail that Harry Bertram recovered the estates of Ellan-gowan, and I am inclined to think that it was an Entail which prompted the Countess of Glenallan to her hideous crime; but it was by will that Miss Margaret Bertram devised the lands of Singleside, and it was under old Sir Hildebrand's will that Francis Osbaldistone succeeded to Osbaldistone Hall.

Even greater are the obligations of our English novelists to the testamentary law. Miss Edgeworth made admirable use of it in "Almeria." Had Englishmen no power of making wills, the "wicked Lord Hertford" could not have executed the notorious instrument which gave such unbounded delight to the scandalmongers of 1842-1843, and then Lord Beaconsfield could not have

drawn his Hogarth-like picture of the reading of Lord Monmouth's will in "Coningsby." Thackeray did not traffic very much in wills, though, to be sure, Jos Sedley left £1000 to Becky Sharp, and the opportune discovery of Lord Ringwood's will in the pocket of his travelling-carriage simplified Philip's career. The insolvent swindler Dr. Firmin, who had robbed his son and absconded to America, left his will "in the tortoiseshell secretaire in the consulting-room, under the picture of Abraham offering up Isaac." Dickens was a great Will-maker. We know that if Dick Swiveller had been a steadier youth he would have inherited more than £150 a year from his aunt Rebecca. That loyal-hearted lover Mr. Barkis, in spite of all rebuffs, made the obdurate Peggotty his residuary legatee. Mr. Finching left "a beautiful will," and Madeline Bray was the subject of a very complicated one. Mr. Dorrit's unexpected fortune accrued to him, I think, as Heir-at-law; but the litigation in *Jarndyce v. Jarndyce* arose, as all the world knows, out of a disputed will; and the Thellusson Will Case, on which Dickens relied, in later years supplied Henry Kingsley with the plot of "Reginald Hetherege." Perhaps Dickens's best piece of Will-making is given in the case of Mr. Spenlow, who, being a practitioner in Doctors' Commons, spoke about his own will with "a serenity, a tranquillity, a calm sunset air" which quite affected David

Copperfield ; and then shattered all poor David's hopes by dying intestate.

Anthony Trollope made good use of a Will and a Codicil in the plot of "Orley Farm." George Eliot, whose disagreeable characters always seem a good deal nearer life than her heroes and heroines, made Mr. Casaubon behave very characteristically in the odious will by which he tried to prevent Dorothea from marrying Will Ladislaw ; and her picture of the disappointment which fell upon the company when Peter Featherstone's will was read is perhaps her best achievement in the way of humour. "Nobody present had a farthing ; but Mr. Trumbull had the gold-headed cane," which, considered as an acknowledgment of his professional services to the deceased, he was ungrateful enough to call "farcical."

The Law of Settlement and Entail is no part of our present study ; but it may be remarked in passing that the legal Opinion on the Base Fee by which Harold Transome in "Felix Holt" held the Transome Estates was written, at George Eliot's request, by a young Chancery Barrister, who still survives, a brilliant figure in the world of Letters.

This is enough, and perhaps more than enough, about Wills in fiction ; but Wills in real life are fully as interesting. The late Sir Charles Butt, who presided over the Divorce Court and the



Probate Court, once told me that, though the aspect of human nature which is exhibited in Divorce is not ideally beautiful, it is far less repulsive than that which is disclosed by Probate. None of the stories which one has read about forged wills, forced wills, wills made under pressure, wills made under misrepresentation, are too strange to be true. A century ago the daughter of a great landowner in the North of England succeeded to his wealth under circumstances which, to put it mildly, caused surprise. In later life she had a public quarrel with a high-born but intemperate dame, who concluded the colloquy by observing, with mordant emphasis, "Well, at any rate I didn't hold my dying father's hand to make him sign a will he never saw, and then murder the Butler to prevent his telling." "Ouida," or Miss Braddon, or some other novelist of High Life might, I think, make something of this scene.

Spiteful Wills—wills which, by rehearsing and revoking previous bequests, mortify the survivors when the testator is no longer in a position to do so *viva voce*—form a very curious branch of the subject. Lord Kew was a very wealthy peer of strict principles and peculiarly acrid temper, and, having no wife or children to annoy, he "took it out," as the saying is, of his brothers, nephews, and other expectant kinsfolk. One gem from his collection I recall, in some such words as these:

“By a previous will I had left £50,000 to my brother John ; but, as he has sent his son to Oxford instead of Cambridge, contrary to my expressed wish, I reduce the legacy to £500.” May the earth lie light on that benevolent old despot ! Eccentricities of bequest, again, might make a pleasant chapter. The present writer, though not yet in tottering age, can recall an annuitant whose claim to £20 a year was founded (in part) on the skill with which he had tied his master’s pigtail, and that master died in 1830. The proverbial longevity of annuitants was illustrated in the case of a grey parrot, for whose maintenance his departed mistress left £10 a year. The bird was not very young when the annuity began to accrue ; and, as years went on and friends dropped off, he began to feel the loneliness of his lot. With a tenderness of heart which did them infinite credit, the good couple to whose care the bird had been left imported a companion exactly like himself to cheer his solitude. Before long one of the parrots died, and the mourners remarked that these younger birds had not half the constitution of the older generation. So, as long as they lived, the parrot lived, and the pension lived also.

Let my closing word on Wills bear the authority of a great name. To a retailer of news who informed him that Lord Omnium, recently de-

ceased, had left a large sum of money to charities, Mr. Gladstone replied with characteristic emphasis: "Thank him for nothing! He was obliged to leave it. He couldn't carry it with him."

## VIII

### PENSIONS

“THERE is no living in this country under twenty thousand a year—not that that suffices, but it entitles one to ask a pension for two or three lives.” This was the verdict of Horace Walpole, who, as Sir George Trevelyan antithetically says, “lived in the country and on the country during more than half a century, doing for the country less than half a day’s work in half a year.” Talleyrand said that no one could conceive how enjoyable a thing existence was capable of being who had not belonged to the *Ancienne Noblesse* of France before the Revolution; but really the younger son of an important Minister, General, Courtier, or Prelate under our English Georges had a good deal to be thankful for. It is pleasant to note the innocent candour with which, in Walpole’s manly declaration, one enormity is made to justify another. A father who held great office in Church or State or Law gave, as a matter of course, all his most desirable preferments to his sons. These preferments enabled the sons to live in opulence at the public charge, their duties being performed by deputy.

The Clerk of the Rolls and the Clerk of the Hanaper had no personal contact with the mysterious articles to which they are attached. The Clerk of the Irons, the Surveyor of the Meltings, and the Accountant of Slops lived far remote from such "low-thoughtéd cares." The writer of this book deduces his insignificant being from a gentleman who divided with a brother the lucrative sinecure of Scavenger of Dublin, though neither ever set foot in that fragrant city. A nephew of Lord-Chancellor Thurlow (who survived till 1874) drew pensions for abolished offices to the amount of £11,000 a year; and a son of Archbishop Moore was Principal Registrar of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury from his boyhood till the abolition of his Court in 1858, when he was pensioned off with £10,000 a year.

When the sands of life were running in the glass, it was customary for a filial placeman to obtain further pensions for his sons and daughters, on the obvious plea that it was cruel to cast young men and women, who had been reared in comfort on the mercies of a rough world. Thus the golden chain of Royal bounty held at least three lives together. The grandfather was First Lord of the Treasury or Chancellor of the Exchequer or Paymaster-General, and into his personal profits it would be invidious, even indecent, to enquire. He might make his eldest son, while still a boy at Eton, Clerk of the Estreats, and his second, before

he took his degree at Cambridge, Usher of the Exchequer. Thus Lord-Chancellor Erskine made his son Secretary of Presentations when he was eighteen, and Charles Greville was appointed Secretary of Jamaica (where he never set his foot) before he was twenty. And then when, after fifty or sixty years of blameless enjoyment, the amiable sinecurist was nearing his last quarter-day, a benevolent Treasury intervened to save his maiden daughters or orphan nieces from pecuniary embarrassment. It was of such "near and dear relations" of a public man that Sydney Smith affirmed that their "eating, drinking, washing, and clothing cost every man in the United Kingdom twopence or threepence a year"; and, to the critics who deprecated this commercial way of regarding the situation, he replied, with characteristic vigour: "I have no idea that the Sophias and Carolines of any man breathing are to eat national veal, to drink public tea, to wear Treasury ribands, and then that we are to be told that it is coarse to animadvert upon this pitiful and eleemosynary splendour. If this is right, why not mention it? If it is wrong, why should not he who enjoys the ease of supporting his sisters in this manner bear the shame of it?" In thus writing of the Pension List as it stood in 1807, the admirable Sydney was at once the successor of Burke and the forerunner of Lord Grey. In 1780 Burke had addressed all the resources of his genius to the task of restoring

the independence of Parliament by economical reform. It was, as Mr. Morley says, the number of sinecure places and unpublished pensions which "furnished the Minister with an irresistible lever." Burke found that "in sweeping away those factitious places and secret pensions he would be robbing the Court of its chief implements of corruption and protecting the representative against his chief motive in selling his country." His power of oratory was reinforced by a minute knowledge of all the shady and shabby abuses, all the manifold and complicated corruptions, which had accumulated under the protection of the Royal name. The reformer's triumph was signal and complete. Vast numbers of sinecures were swept away, but some remained. The Pension List was closely curtailed, but pensions were still conferred. No public servant ever more richly earned a provision for his old age and decrepitude than Burke himself; but when, broken by years and sorrows, he accepted a pension from the Crown, a Whig Duke of fabulous wealth, just thirty years old, had the temerity to charge him with a discreditable departure from his former principles of economic reform. The Duke was a booby: but his foolhardiness enriched English literature with 'A Letter to a Noble Lord on the Attacks made on Mr. Burke and his Pension.' To read that Letter, even after the lapse of 110 years, is to realize that, in spite of all corruption and all

abuse, pecuniary rewards for political service need not be dishonourable or unreasonable.

But corruption and abuse there were, and in sufficient quantities to justify all the bitter fun which "Peter Plymley" poured upon the Cannings, the Jenkinsons, and the Percevals. The reform of the Pension List became a cardinal object of reforming Radicals; and politicians like Joseph Hume, publicists like Albany Fonblanque, pursued it with incessant perseverance,

"Till Grey went forth in 'Thirty-two to storm Corruption's hold."

In 1834 the first Reformed Parliament overhauled the whole system and brought some curious transactions into the light of day. Whereas up to that time the Pension List amounted to £145,000 a year, it was now reduced to £75,000; and its benefits were restricted to "servants of the Crown and public, and to those who by their useful discoveries in science or attainments in literature and the arts had merited the gracious consideration of their Sovereign and the gratitude of their country." Vested interests were, of course, respected; for had we not even compensated the slaveholders? Two years ago one of these beneficiaries survived in a serene old age, and, for all I know, there may be others still spared to us, for, as Mr. G. A. Sala truly remarked, it never is safe to say that any one is dead, for if you do he is



sure to write from the country and say he is only ninety-seven and never was better.

A typical representative of the unreformed system was John Wilson Croker (1780-1857), whose literary efforts Macaulay trounced, and whose political utterances were thus described by Lord Beaconsfield:—

“There never was a fellow for giving a good hearty kick to the people like Rigby. Himself sprung from the dregs of the populace, this was disinterested. What could be more patriotic and magnanimous than his jeremiads over the fall of the Montmorencis and the Crillions, or the possible catastrophe of the Percys and the Seymours? The truth of all this hullabaloo was that Rigby had a sly pension which, by an inevitable association of ideas, he always connected with the maintenance of an aristocracy. All his rigmarole dissertations on the French Revolution were impelled by this secret influence; and, when he moaned like a mandrake over Nottingham Castle in flames, the rogue had an eye all the while to quarter-day.”

It was an evil day for those who love to grow rich upon the public money when Mr. Gladstone became the controller of the National Purse. One of his first acts was to revise the system of political pensions, which by an Act of 1869 was reconstituted as it stands to-day. There are now three classes of persons entitled to pensions for services

rendered in political office ; and the scale is arranged on that curious principle which also regulates the "tips" to servants in a private house—that the larger your wage is, the larger your gratuity shall be. Thus a Minister who has drawn £5000 a year is entitled after four years' service to a pension of £2000 a year ; he who has drawn £3000 a year for six years is entitled to £1200 a year ; while he who has laboured for ten years for the modest remuneration of £1000 a year must be content with a pittance of £800 a year. *Qui habet, dabitur ei* ; but with this restriction—that only four pensions of any one class can run concurrently.

Politicians who had been brought up in the "spacious days" and generous methods of the older dispensation were by no means enamoured of what they used to call "Gladstone's cheese-paring economies." Sir William Gregory used to relate how, when, as a child, he asked Lord Melbourne for a fine red stick of official sealing-wax, that genial Minister thrust it into his hand, together with a bundle of quill pens, saying, "You can't begin too early. All these things belong to the public, and your business in life must be to get out of the public all you can." An eminent statesman, trained in these traditions, had drawn from very early days a pension for an abolished office in Chancery. In due course he became a Cabinet Minister, and, when he fell from that high

estate, he duly pocketed his £2000 a year. Later he came into a very large income, but this he obligingly saved for his nephews and nieces, living meanwhile on his twofold pension.

I will conclude with a pleasanter anecdote. Until half-way through the last century it was customary to give a Speaker on retiring from the House of Commons a pension of £2000 a year for two lives. It is related that in 1857 Mr. Speaker Shaw-Lefevre, on his elevation to the peerage as Lord Eversley, said that he could not endure the thought of imposing a burden on posterity, and would therefore take £4000 a year for his own life instead of £2000 a year for two. This public-spirited action was highly commended, and, as he lived till 1888, virtue was, as it ought always to be, its own reward.

## IX

### THE SEASON AS IT WAS

THE subject is worthy to be celebrated both in verse and in prose. Exactly sixty years ago Bulwer-Lytton, in his anonymous satire "The New Timon," thus described the nocturnal aspect of the West End in that choice period of the year which to us Londoners is pre-eminently "The Season":—

"O'er Royal London, in luxuriant May,  
While lamps yet twinkle, dawning creeps the day.  
Home from the hell the pale-eyed gamester steals;  
Home from the ball flash jaded Beauty's wheels;  
From fields suburban rolls the early cart;  
So rests the Revel—so awakes the Mart."

Twenty-four years later Lord Beaconsfield, in "Lothair," gave a vivid sketch of the same scenes as beheld by daylight:—

"Town was beginning to blaze. Broughams whirled and bright barouches glanced, troops of social cavalry cantered and caracolled in morning rides, and the bells of prancing ponies, lashed by delicate hands, ginged in the laughing air. There were stoppages in Bond Street—which seems to

cap the climax of civilization, after crowded clubs and swarming parks."

It is curious that of the two descriptions the earlier needs much less revision than the later. Lamps still "twinkle" (though, to be sure, they are electric, whereas when Bulwer-Lytton wrote gas had barely ousted oil from its last fastness in Grosvenor Square). "Hells," though more euphemistically named, still invite the domiciliary visits of our much-aspersed police. "Beauty" dances even more vigorously than in 1846, for Waltzes and Kitchen-Lancers and Washington Posts have superseded the decorous quadrilles which our mothers loved. And still the market-gardens of Acton and Ealing and Hounslow send their "towering squadrons" of waggons laden heavens-high with the fruits and vegetables for to-morrow's luncheon. In this merry month of May 1906 an observer, standing at Hyde Park Corner "when the night and morning meet," sees London substantially as Bulwer-Lytton saw it.

But, when we turn to Lord Beaconsfield's description, the changes wrought by six-and-thirty years are curiously marked. "Bright barouches glanced." In the present day a Barouche, the handsomest and gracefulest of all open carriages, is as rare as an Auk's Egg or an original Folio of Shakespeare. Only two or three survive. One, richly dight in royal crimson, bears the Queen, beautiful as Cleopatra in her barge. In another,

almost imperially purple, Lady Londonderry sits enthroned ; a third, palely blue as the forget-me-not, carries Lady Carysfort ; but soon the tale of barouches ends. Victorias and landaus and "Clarences" and "Sociables" make the common throng of carriages, and their serried ranks give way to the impetuous onrush of the noxious Motor or the milder impact of the Electric Brougham.

"Troops of social cavalry" were, when Lord Beaconsfield wrote "Lothair," the characteristic glories of Rotten Row ; but horses and horsemanship alike have waned. Men take their constitutional canter in costumes anciently confined to rat-catching, and the general aspect of Rotten Row suggests the idea of Mounted Infantry rather than of "Cavalry." Alongside the ride forty years ago ladies drove their pony-phaetons—a pretty practice and a pretty carriage ; but both have utterly disappeared, and the only bells that "gingle in the laughing air" are the warning signals of the Petrol Fiend, as, bent on destruction, he swoops down from Marble Arch to Piccadilly. Does a captious critic gaze enquiringly on the unfamiliar verb to "gingle" ? It was thus that Lord Beaconsfield wrote it in "Lothair" ; even as in the same high romance he described a lady with a rich bunch of "Stephanopolis" in her hand. It is not for the ephemeral scribbler to correct

the orthography of the immortal dead. As to "stoppages in Bond Street," they were isolated and noteworthy incidents in 1870; in 1906, thanks to the admission of omnibuses into the narrow thoroughfare, they are occurrences as regular as the postman's knock or the policeman's mailed tread.

We have seen the aspects in which the London Season presented itself to two great men of yore. Let me now descend to a more personal level. We will imagine ourselves transported back to the year 1880, and to the month of May. A young gentleman—some five-and-twenty summers, as Mr. G. P. R. James would have said, have passed over his fair head—is standing near the steps of St. George's Hospital between the hours of eleven and midnight. He is smartly dressed in evening clothes, with a white waistcoat, a gardenia in his button-hole, and a silver-crutched stick in his hand. He is smoking a cigarette and pondering the question where he shall spend his evening, or, more strictly, the early hours of next day. He is in a state of serene contentment with himself and the world, for he has just eaten an excellent dinner, where plovers' eggs and asparagus have reminded him that the Season has really begun. To the pleasure-seeking Londoner these symptoms of returning summer mean more, far more, than the dogrose in the hedgerow or the first note of the nightingale in the copse. Since dinner he has

just looked in at an evening party, which bored him badly, and has "cut" two others where he was not so likely to be missed. And now arises the vital question of the Balls. I use the plural number, for there will certainly be two, and probably three, to choose from. Here, at St. George's Hospital, our youth is at the centre of the world's social concourse. A swift and unbroken stream of carriages is pouring down from Grosvenor Square and Mayfair to Belgrave Square and Eaton Square and Chesham Place, and it meets as it goes the ascending procession which begins in Belgravia and ends in Portman Square. To-night there is a Royal Ball at Grosvenor House, certainly the most stately event of the season ; a little dance, exquisitely gay and bright, in Piccadilly ; and a gorgeous entertainment in Prince's Gate, where the aspiring Distiller is struggling, with enormous outlay, into social fame. All these have solicited the honour of our young friend's presence, and now is the moment of decision. It does not take long to repudiate Prince's Gate ; there will be the best band in London, and ortolans for supper, but there will be no one there that one ever saw before, and it is too sickening to be called "My boy" by that bow-windowed bounder, the master of the house. There remain Grosvenor House and Piccadilly, and happily these can be combined in a harmonious perfection. Grosvenor House shall come first, for the arrival of



the Prince and Princess is a pageant worth seeing—the most gracious host and the most beautiful hostess in London ushering the Royal guests, with courtly pomp, into the great gallery, walled with the canvases of Rubens, which serves as the dancing-room. Then the fun begins, and the bright hours fly swiftly, till one o'clock suggests the tender thought of supper, which is served on gold plate and Sèvres china in a garden-tent of Gobelins tapestry. And now it is time for a move; and our youth, extricating himself from the undesired attentions of the linkmen, pops into a hansom and speeds to Piccadilly, where he finds delights of a different kind—no Royalty, no pomp, no ceremony; but a warm welcome, and all his intimate friends, and the nicest girls in London eager for a valse.

As day begins to peep, he drinks his crowning tumbler of champagne-cup, and strolls home under the opalescent dawn, sniffing the fragrance from pyramids of strawberries as they roll towards Covent Garden, and exchanging a friendly "Good night" with the policeman on the beat, who seems to think that "Good morning" would be a more suitable greeting. So to bed, with the cheerful consciousness of a day's work well done, and the even more exhilarating prospect of an unbroken succession of such days, full of feasting and dancing and riding and polo and lawn-tennis, till August stifles the Season with

its dust and drives the revellers to Homburg or the moors.

But I awake, and lo! it is a dream, though a dream well founded on reality. For I have been describing the London Season as it was when the world was young.

“When all the world is old, lad,  
And all the trees are brown ;  
And all the sport is stale, lad,  
And all the wheels run down ;  
Creep home, and take your place there,  
The spent and maimed among :  
God grant you find one face there,  
You loved when all was young.”

## X

### THE SEASON AS IT IS

THAT delicate critic, the late Mr. William Cory, observes in one of his letters that Virgil's

"Sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt"

has its modern equivalent in Wordsworth's

"Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade  
Of that which once was great is passed away."

The full luxury of that grief is reserved for those who, a decade hence, shall moralize on "the London Season," for the thing which now we so describe will then have utterly perished, and its name will only arouse a tender and regretful emotion. Even now we have seen its glories fade, and soon it will have shared the fate of those Venetian splendours which Wordsworth mourned. But in the meantime it still exists, though in a vastly different form from that which it wore in mid-Victorian years. Just now I was describing some of the changes which have occurred since the distant days when Bulwer-Lytton and Lord Beaconsfield described London in May; and, following humbly in their wake, I endeavoured to

depict it as it was when I had my part in it. But change only yields place to change. Society, like the individuals who compose it, passes onward in perpetual vicissitude. As Shelley says, "Naught may endure but mutability." So the London Season of 1906 differs as notably from the Season of 1880 as the Season of 1880 from that of 1846. Let me catalogue some of the changes and try to account for them. In the first place, the Season is much less exactly circumscribed by dates. In days gone by, it began with the Opening of Parliament, which was always about the 7th of February, and it lasted, with its regular intermissions for Easter and Whitsuntide, till the last week of July. Then Society transported itself in turn to Goodwood, to Cowes, and to a German watering-place or a Scotch moor, according to its physical condition, and it was darkly rumoured that, if people found themselves compelled by domestic or financial reasons to remain in London during August, they sought to escape detection by keeping the windows fronting the street closely shuttered, and lived in their back rooms in unbroken contemplation of the leads and the mews. If you chanced to meet a man in Piccadilly in September, you might be sure that he would be wearing country clothes and would assure you that he was only "passing through" between Doncaster and Scotland. Nowadays the Season has no particular limits. London is nearly as full in December

as it is in May. Dinners and plays and suppers at restaurants are as frequent, and, barring the fogs, as bright, at Christmas as at Midsummer. Even in September Clubland is not deserted; and there are people bold enough to defy the world by returning from their summer exodus as early as October. The reason for the change, as for many others like it, is the reduction of territorial incomes. 1880 may be taken as, roughly, the last of the good years for agriculture. The incessant rains of 1879 had even then begun to tell their tale. Tenants were asking for big reductions, and farms hitherto eagerly sought were becoming unlettable. I know a landowner on a great scale who, a year or two later, only pocketed 10 per cent. of his income from land, whereas five years before he would have thought an abatement of 10 per cent. disastrous. All this has told increasingly on social life, for people found themselves unable to keep both a country house and a London house going at the same time, and, being driven to choose between the two, often decided to let the country house and its shooting and make London their headquarters for the whole year. So, by degrees, autumn faded imperceptibly into winter, winter into spring, and spring into summer. Each season in its turn found people dwelling peaceably in their urban habitations, entertaining and being entertained; and so "*the Season*" lost its sharp edges. The meeting of Parliament brought

no perceptible change in the aspect of the town. "High Midsummer Poms" were no longer so "high" as in former years, but, *per contra*, there was much more gaiety in the autumn and winter and early spring.

Another cause which has contributed to the effacement of the ancient time-marks is that the Court tends to disregard them. Under the present reign, Windsor Castle has become as much a social centre as Buckingham Palace. There are banquets in St. George's Hall in December, as well as garden-parties on the the Slopes in June ; and so, under the action of Royal influence, the social seasons melt into one another, like the hues of the prism. Then, again, the practice of the "Week-end," imported from Lancashire and sanctioned by Westminster, helps to denude the town in summer ; for the "end" tends naturally to prolong itself till it overlaps the beginning, and Friday-to-Tuesday parties, treading on the heels of Whitsuntide and to be followed in quick succession by Ascot, make mish-mash of what was aforesaid "an entire and perfect chrysolite"—a complete and continuous whole.

In describing my hero of 1880 as he surveyed his evening's amusements and chose the most rewarding, I took for granted that he had at least three balls to choose from. Nowadays he is lucky if he has one. Here again, and conspicuously, agricultural depression has made its

mark. In the years between 1870 and 1880, during an unbroken spell of good trade and good harvests, rich people struggled with one another for a vacant night on which to entertain their friends. For example, Lady A. had just brought out a daughter, and wished to give a ball for her benefit. Say that she set her affections on Monday the 28th of May. Before she issued her cards she took counsel with all her friends, for in those days ball-giving mothers were a sort of Limited Company, and all knew one another. She found that Mrs. B. had mentally fixed on Tuesday, 29th, and, if Mrs. C. had thought of Monday, she would be so kind as to take Wednesday, 30th. So all was amicably agreed; there would be no clashing, which would be such a pity and would spoil both balls; and the cards were duly issued. Directly afterwards, as if moved by some occult and fiendish impulse, the Duchess of D—— pounced on Monday, 28th, for a Royal Ball at D—— House, or, worse still because more perilously tempting, for a “very small dance,” to which all the nicest young men would go, and where they would stay till three. In the face of such mortifications as these, the emulous hospitalities of the aspiring Distiller were of no account; for the “nice men” would either disregard them, or, having looked in for half-an-hour, would come on to spend the night at the houses where they felt themselves at home.

The hero of 1880, if only he was well connected, well mannered, and sufficiently well known, might fairly reckon on dining six nights out of the seven at a host's expense. Indeed, if he was at all popular, he could safely afford to decline the invitation which old Mr. Wellbore issued six weeks in advance and reserve himself for a livelier meal at shorter notice. Not so to-day. Our young friend, if he has a constitutional objection to paying for his own dinner, must take what he can get in the way of invitations, and not be too particular about the cook or the company. Here the cause of change is not decrease of wealth. As long as there is a balance at the bank, and even when there is none, people will dine ; and dinner-giving is the last form of hospitality which Society will let die. But nowadays dinners are made ancillary to Bridge. If our friend cannot afford to lose £50 in an evening he will not be asked to dine at a house which reckons itself as belonging to "the Mode" ; or if, for old acquaintance' sake, he is allowed to find a place at the dinner-table, he is compelled to sit all the evening by the least attractive daughter of the house, or to listen to some fogey, too fossilized for Bridge, discoursing on the iniquities of Mr. Birrell's Bill. "Tobacco," said Lord Beaconsfield, "is the Tomb of Love." If he were with us now, he would pronounce that Bridge is the Extinguisher of Hospitality.

Yet once again I note a startling discrepancy



between the Season as it was and the Season as it is. Then a young man who wanted air and exercise in the afternoon played tennis at Lord's, or skated at Prince's, or took a gallop in Richmond Park, or, if he was very adventurous and up-to-date, sped out to Hampton Court or Windsor on a bone-shaking bicycle six feet high. All these recreations are possible to him to-day ; but all have yielded to motoring. Dressed in the most unbecoming of all known costumes, his expressive eyes concealed by goggles, and his graceful proportions swathed in oilskin, he urges his mad career to Brighton or Stratford or Salisbury Plain. No doubt he has the most fascinating companions in the world, for girls are enthusiastic motorists ; but I fancy that Edwin and Angelina presented a more attractive appearance when, neatly dressed and beautifully mounted, they rode in the cool of the evening along the shady side of Rotten Row.

However, I am a kind of social "Old Mortality" rummaging among the tombs of what has been and can be no more, and I fancy that Old Mortality's opinions on youth and beauty would have been justly disregarded.

## XI

### THE SINS OF SOCIETY

IN the year 1870 a flame of religious zeal was suddenly kindled in the West End of London. In that year the Rev. George Howard Wilkinson (now Bishop of St. Andrews) was appointed Vicar of St. Peter's, Eaton Square. The church in the Belgravian district was as dry as tinder ; it caught fire from Mr. Wilkinson's fervour, and the fire soon became a conflagration. This is Matthew Arnold's description of the great preacher at the height of his power : " He was so evidently sincere, more than sincere, burnt up with sorrow, that he carried every one with him, and half the church was in tears. I do not much believe in good being done by a man unless he can give *light*, and Wilkinson's fire is very turbid ; but his power of heating, penetrating, and agitating is extraordinary." This description belongs to the year 1872, but it might have been written with equal truth at any date between 1870 and 1883. In all my experience of preaching (which is long, wide, and varied) I have never seen a congregation dominated by its minister so absolutely as the

congregation of St. Peter's was dominated by Mr. Wilkinson. I say "congregation" advisedly, for I should think that at least half the seatholders belonged to other parishes. The smartest carriages in London blocked the approach to the church. The great dames of Grosvenor Square and Carlton House Terrace rubbed shoulders with the opulent inhabitants of Tyburnia and South Kensington, Cabinet Ministers fought for places in the gallery, and M.P.'s were no more accounted of than silver in the days of Solomon.

And this was not a mere assemblage of hearers. The congregation of St. Peter's were pre-eminently givers. £4000 a year was the regular product of the alms-bags, let alone the innumerable sums sent privately to the Vicar. "I want a thousand pounds." This simple but emphatic statement from the pulpit one Sunday was succeeded on the following Sunday by the quiet announcement, "I have got a thousand pounds." What was the secret of this attraction? It was entirely personal. It did not in the least depend on theological bias. Mr. Wilkinson belonged to no party. He had begun life as an Evangelical, and he retained the unction and fervour which were characteristic of that school at its best; but he was feeling his way towards a higher churchmanship, and had discarded most of his earlier shibboleths. The fabric was frankly hideous, and the well-meant attempts to make it look less like a barn and more like a

church only resulted in something between a mosque and a synagogue. There was no ritualism. The music was too elaborate for the choir, and the curates were feeble beyond all description. The Vicar was everything ; and even he had none of the gifts which are commonly supposed to make a Popular Preacher. He was not the least flummery or flowery. He was reserved and dignified in manner, and his language was quite unadorned. His voice was a monotonous moan, occasionally rising into a howl. He was conspicuously free from the tendency to prophesy smooth things, and he even seemed to take a delight in rubbing the pungent lotion of his spiritual satire into the sore places of the hearers' conscience. If Jeremiah had prophesied in a surplice, he would have been like the Prophet of Belgravia ; and as for Savonarola, his sermon, as paraphrased in chapter xxiv. of "Romola," might have been delivered, with scarcely a word altered, from the pulpit of St. Peter's.

And here we touch the pith and core of Mr. Wilkinson's preaching. He rebuked the Sins of Society as no one had ventured to rebuke them since the days of Whitefield and the Wesleys. The Tractarian Movement, so heart-searching, so conscience-stirring at Oxford, had succumbed in the fashionable parts of London to the influences which surrounded it, and had degenerated into a sort of easy-going ceremonialism—partly anti-

quarian, partly worldly, and wholly ineffective for spiritual revival or moral reformation. Into this Dead Sea of lethargy and formalism Mr. Wilkinson burst like a gunboat. He scattered his fire left and right, aimed high and aimed low, blazed and bombarded without fear or favour; sent some crafts to the bottom, set fire to others, and covered the sea with wreckage. In less metaphorical language, he rebuked the sins of all and sundry, from Duchesses to scullery-maids, Premiers to page-boys, octogenarian rakes to damsels in their teens. Then, as now, Society loved to be scolded, and the more Mr. Wilkinson thundered the more it crowded to his feet. "Pay your bills." "Get up when you are called." "Don't stay till three at a ball and then say that you are too delicate for early services." "Eat one dinner a day instead of three, and try to earn that one." "Give up champagne for the season, and what you save on your wine-merchant's bill send to the Mission Field." "You are sixty-five years old and have not been confirmed. Never too late to mend. Join a Confirmation Class at once, and try to remedy, by good example now, all the harm you have done your servants or your neighbours by fifty years' indifference." "Sell that diamond cross which you carry with you into the sin-polluted atmosphere of the Opera, give the proceeds to feed the poor, and wear the only real cross—the cross of self-discipline and self-denial."

These are echoes—faint, indeed, but not, I think, unfaithful—of thirty years ago, and they have suddenly been awoke from their long slumber by the sermons which Father Vaughan has just been preaching at the Jesuits' Church in Farm Street, Mayfair. The good Father, exalting his own church, perhaps a little unduly, at the expense of the Anglican churches in the district, observed complacently that "Farm Street, in spite of its extension, was all too small" for its congregation. For my own part, I do not belong to that fold, and I never wander to strange churches for the pleasure of having my ears tickled; so I only know Father Vaughan's utterances as they reach me through the newspapers. A report in the third person always tends to enfeeble rhetoric; but, in spite of that hindrance, Father Vaughan's style seems to lack nothing in the way of emphasis or directness. Here is a fragment of his sermon preached on Sunday the 10th of June 1906:—

"It was no easy task for the votaries of pleasure when Sunday came round to all of a sudden forget their class distinctions, their privileged sets, their social successes, their worldly goods, and to remember that they were going into the presence of Him before whom man and woman were not what they happened to have, but what they happened to be—that the debutante beauty might be before God less than her maid who waited up half the night for her, nay, less than the meanest scullery-

maid below stairs ; while the millionaire with means to buy up whole countries might be in God's sight far less pleasing and very much more guilty than the lowest groom in his stable yard."

Not less vigorous was the allocution of June 17.

"If Dives, who was buried in Hell, were to revisit the earth he would most surely have the *entrée* to London's smartest set to-day. He would be literally pelted with invitations. And why not? Dives, so well groomed and turned out, with such a well-lined larder and so well-stocked a cellar, would be the very ideal host to cultivate. He would 'do you so well,' you would meet the 'right people at his place,' and you could always bring your 'latest friend.' Besides, what a good time one would have at his house-parties, where there would be no fear of being bored or dull!"<sup>1</sup>

And yet again:—

"It was well when the winning-card fell into their hands, for then there was just a chance of some dressmaker or tradesman being paid something on account before becoming bankrupt. With such examples of the misuse of wealth before their eyes, it was a wonder there were not more Socialists than there actually were."

All the memories of my youth have been revived by Father Vaughan. Instead of 1906, 1876; instead of the Gothic gloom of Farm

<sup>1</sup> Here I seem to catch an echo of Dr. Pusey's sermon on "Why did Dives lose his soul?"

Street, the tawdry glare of St. Peter's, Eaton Square ; instead of a Jesuit Father in the pulpit, a vigorous Protestant who renounces the Pope and all his works and glories in the Anglicanism of the Church of England. Grant those differences, which after all are more incidental than essential, and the sermons exactly reproduce those stirring days when the present Bishop of St. Andrews "shook the arsenal" of fashion, "thundered over" London, and achieved, as his admirers said, the supreme distinction of spoiling the London Season.

I am convinced that the Higher Critics of a later age, collating the Wilkinsonian tradition with such fragments as remain of Father Vaughan's discourses, will come to the conclusion that "Wilkinson" never existed (except in Wordsworth's ode to the Spade), but was a kind of heroic figure conceived by a much later generation, which had quivered under the rhetoric of a real person or persons called Vaughan ; and the opinion of the learned will be sharply divided on such questions as whether Vaughan was one or many ; if one, whether he was a Priest, a Cardinal, a Head Master, or an Independent Minister ; or whether he was all four at different stages of his career.



## XII

### OXFORD

“Once, my dear—but the world was young then—  
Magdalen elms and Trinity limes,—  
Lissom the oars and backs that swung then,  
Eight good men in the good old times—  
Careless we and the chorus flung then.  
Under St. Mary’s chimes !

“Still on her spire the pigeons hover ;  
Still by her gateway flits the gown ;  
Ah, but her secret ? You, young lover,  
Drumming her old ones forth from town,  
Know you the secret none discover ?  
Tell it—when *you* go down.”

WHAT Matthew Arnold did for the interpretation of Oxford through the medium of prose, that Mr. Quiller-Couch has done through the medium of verse. In the poem from which I have just quoted two stanzas he conveys, as no one else has ever conveyed it in poetry, the tender and elusive charm of that incomparable place.

“ Know you her secret none can utter—  
Hers of the Book, the tripled Crown ? ”

It is a hard question, and susceptible of some very

prosaic and therefore inappropriate answers. The true answer can, I think, only be given by those for whom Oxford lies, half hid, in the enchanted past: "Tell it—when *you* go down."

Some parts of the spell which Oxford exercises on those who are subjected to her influence are in no sense secret. We perceive them from the day when we first set foot within her precincts, and the sense of them abides with us for ever.

"If less insensible than sodden clay  
In a sea-river's bed at ebb of tide,"

all sons of Oxford must realize her material beauty, her historical pre-eminence, her contribution to thought and culture, her influence on the religious life of England.

"Ah, but her secret? You, young lover."

There is nothing secret about all this; it is palpable and manifest; and yet it does not exhaust the spell. Something there is that remains undiscovered, or at best half-discovered—felt and guessed at, but not clearly apprehended—until we have passed away from the "dreaming spires"—the cloisters and the gardens and the river—to that sterner life for which these mysterious enchantments have been preparing us.

"Know you the secret none discover?"

If you do, that is proof that time has done its work and has brought to the test of practical result the influences which were shaping your mind and,

still more potently, your heart, between eighteen and twenty-two. What that "secret" is, let an unworthy son of Oxford try to tell.

To begin with a negative, it is not the secret of Nirvana. There are misguided critics abroad in the land who seem to assume that life lived easily in a beautiful place, amid a society which includes all knowledge in its comprehensive survey, and far remote from the human tragedy of poverty and toil and pain, must necessarily be calm. And so, as regards the actual work and warfare of mankind, it may be. The bitter cry of starving Poplar does not very readily penetrate to the well-spread table of an Oxford common-room. In a labour-clad villa in the Parks we can afford to reason very temperately about life in cities where five families camp in one room. But when we leave the actualities of life and come to the region of thought and opinion, all the pent energy of Oxford seethes and stirs. The Hebrew word for "Prophet" comes, I believe, from a root which signifies to bubble like water on the flames; and in this fervency of thought and feeling Oxford is characteristically prophetic. It is a tradition that in some year of the passion-torn 'forties the subject for the Newdigate Prize Poem was Cromwell, whereas the subject for the corresponding poem at Cambridge was Plato. In that selection Oxford was true to herself. For a century at least (even if we leave out of sight her earlier convulsions) she

has been the battle-field of contending sects. Her air has resounded with party-cries, and the dead bodies of the controversially slain have lain thick in her streets. All the opposing forces of Church and State, of theology and politics, of philosophy and science, of literary and social and economic theory, have contended for mastery in the place which Matthew Arnold, with rare irony, described as "so unruffled by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!" Every succeeding generation of Oxford men has borne its part in these ever-recurring strifes. To hold aloof from them would have been poltroonery. Passionately convinced (at twenty) that we had sworn ourselves for life to each cause which we espoused, we have pleaded and planned and denounced and persuaded; have struck the shrewdest blows which our strength could compass, and devised the most dangerous pitfalls which wit could suggest. Nothing came of it all, and nothing could come, except the ruin of our appointed studies and the resulting dislocation of all subsequent life. But we were obeying the irresistible impulse of the time and the place in which our lot was cast, and we were ready to risk our all upon the venture.

" Never we wince, though none deplore us,  
 We who go reaping that we sowed;  
 Cities at cockcrow wake before us—  
 Hey, for the lilt of the London road!  
 One look back, and a rousing chorus!  
 Never a palinode!"

It is when we have finally sung that chorus and have travelled a few miles upon that road, that we learn the secret which we never discovered while as yet Oxford held us in the thick of the fight. We thought then that we were the most desperate partizans; we asked no quarter, and gave none; pushed our argumentative victories to their uttermost consequences, and made short work of a fallen foe. But, when all the old battle-cries have died out of our ears, we begin to perceive humaner voices. All at once we realize that a great part of our old contentions was only sound and fury and self-deception, and that, though the causes for which we strove may have been absolutely right, our opponents were not necessarily villains. In a word, we have learnt the Secret of Oxford. All the time that we were fighting and fuming, the higher and subtler influences of the place were moulding us, unconscious though we were, to a more gracious ideal. We had really learnt to distinguish between intellectual error and moral obliquity. We could differ from another on every point of the political and theological compass, and yet in our hearts acknowledge him to be the best of all good fellows. Without surrendering a single conviction, we came to see the virtue of so stating our beliefs as to persuade and propitiate, instead of offending and alienating. We had attained to that temper which, in the sphere of thought and opinion,

is analogous to the crowning virtue of Christian charity.

“Tell it—when *you* go down.”

Lately it has been my privilege to address a considerable gathering of Oxford undergraduates, all keenly alive to the interests and controversies of the present hour, all devotedly loyal to the tradition of Oxford as each understood it, and all with their eyes eagerly fixed on “the wistful limit of the world.” With such an audience it was inevitable to insist on the graces and benedictions which Oxford can confer, and to dwell on Mr. Gladstone’s dogma that to call a man a “typically Oxford man” is to bestow the highest possible praise.

But this was not all. Something more remained to be said. It was for a speaker who had travelled for thirty years on “the London road” to state as plainly as he could his own deepest obligation to the place which had decided the course and complexion of his life. And, when it was difficult to express that obligation in the pedestrian prose of an after-dinner speech, he turned for succour to the poet who sang of “the secret none discover.” Wherever philosophical insight is combined with literary genius and personal charm, one says instinctively, “That man is, or ought to be, an Oxford man.” Chiefest among the great names which Oxford ought to claim but cannot is the name of Edmund Burke ;

and the "Secret" on which we have been discoursing seems to be conveyed with luminous precision in his description of the ideal character: "It is our business . . . to bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth ; so to be patriots as not to forget we are gentlemen ; to cultivate friendships and to incur enmities ; to have both strong, but both selected—in the one to be placable, in the other immovable." Whoso has attained to that ideal has learnt the "Secret" of Oxford.

## XIII

### SCHOOLS FOR SHEPHERDS

“The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed.”

WHY not? Because the Shepherds are so imperfectly trained for their business. This, at any rate, is the testimony of a Canon (sometime Examining Chaplain to a Bishop) who at the Diocesan Conference at Ely the other day declared that the clergy were “not qualified to provide instruction in Church Doctrine for the laity because they were not properly trained”; and further testified that “Nonconformist Ministers were much better trained” than the English Clergy. This testimony from a superior Shepherd is rather startling for the Sheep, and it suggests some interesting comparisons. It is, I take it, unquestionable that Nonconformist ministers and Roman Catholic priests alike have much more of a technical education than is thought necessary for their Anglican brothers. They are, so to say, caught early, and their studies from seventeen or eighteen onwards are directed steadily towards their appointed work in life. A Roman Seminarist learns his Latin and Greek as subsidiary to higher



studies ; he spends, I believe, two years in Philosophy and four in Theology, and is harassed by incessant examinations. The training of the youth who aspires to the Nonconformist ministry is of much the same kind. "Moral Theology," in other words the Science of the Confessional, he naturally does not learn ; but, on the other hand, he is sedulously trained for the work of public speaking and preaching. "If you can't preach," said Spurgeon to his students at Stockwell, "it is a clear proof that God doesn't mean you to be a preacher, and you must choose some other occupation."

Vastly different is the training of the English Curate. Private School, Public School, and University : cricket, football, rowing : elementary Greek and Latin, and a smattering of Law or History—these constitute his "atmosphere," his moral and mental discipline, between the ages of ten and twenty-three. Even more remarkable is his theological equipment. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, he knows absolutely nothing about the Church of which he is to be a minister, her doctrines, history, or practical system. He has been enveloped from his youth up by a hazy atmosphere of Undogmatic Religion. I well remember that an Undergraduate friend of mine, who came to Oxford from Dr. Temple's Sixth Form at Rugby, declined to believe that there are two Sacraments. That there was a religious

ceremony called "The Sacrament," for which some people stayed after the ordinary service, he was well aware, as also that infants were ceremonially sprinkled ; but that this latter ceremony was a Sacrament he could not be induced to believe. During his last year at Oxford he informed himself better on this and some similar topics, and a year afterwards was preaching, with great acceptance, to a fashionable congregation. From what I knew of my friend's theological attainments, I should imagine that the Bishop's Examination could not have been a very terrifying process ; but forty years earlier it must have been even less formidable. The Hon. and Rev. George Spencer (uncle of the present Lord Spencer) was destined from an early age for the Family Living in Northamptonshire. He hunted and shot, and danced, and travelled on the Continent, and held a commission in the Yeomanry. After two years at Trinity College, Cambridge, he took a " Nobleman's Degree," and, when he neared the canonical age of twenty-three, he wrote to the Bishop of Peterborough's Examining Chaplain offering himself for Ordination and asking advice as to his preparation. The examiner—ah, would that there were more like him !—wrote back :—

" It is impossible that I should ever entertain any idea of subjecting a gentleman with whose talents and good qualities I am so well acquainted as I am with yours to any examination except as

a matter of form, for which a verse in the Greek Testament and an Article of the Church of England returned into Latin will be amply sufficient."

This reassuring letter was written on the 12th of October 1822, and on the 22nd of December next ensuing George Spencer was ordained Deacon and a year later Priest. "On the evening before the ordination, whilst the Bishop and various clergymen and their ladies and the candidates amused themselves with a rubber of whist, Mr. Spencer refused to play." And the refusal was considered, as perhaps it was, noteworthy.

The Movement which issued from Oxford in 1833 introduced some improvement into the method of conducting ordinations, as into other departments of the Church's work. The examination became, though not yet very serious, at least a little less farcical, and some attempt was made in charges and sermons to urge upon the candidates the gravity of what they were undertaking. But, according to the late Bishop Woodford, "the evenings, during which they were left to themselves, became evenings of social enjoyment, if not of boisterous merriment, in which the features of an old college supper-party were reproduced, rather than intervals of solemn thought and retirement."

Bishop Samuel Wilberforce raised the standard of what was expected in the way of Scriptural and theological knowledge; he made the exami-

nation a reality ; he laid special stress on sermon-writing ; and he made the Ember Week a season of spiritual retirement in which men about to take the most decisive step in life might be brought face to face with the responsibilities involved in their decision. The example set by Wilberforce was followed, sooner or later, by every bishop on the bench ; the requirements have been raised, and the system has been developed and improved ; but the credit of initiation belongs to that epoch-making episcopate, which began in 1845 and ended, through a false step made by a horse on the Surrey Downs, on the 19th of July 1873.

It soon became apparent to those who had the spiritual interests of the Church at heart that something more than twelve months' book-work and a week of religious retirement was required to wean the ordinary B.A. from the puerilities—if nothing worse—of his Undergraduate life, and to equip him for a life of Pastorship and Teachership. The sense of this need gave rise to the creation of Theological Colleges, where a man who looked forward to Holy Orders might, after taking his ordinary degree at Oxford or Cambridge, apply himself to the studies more specially necessary for his chosen work, and—even more important still—might acquire the habits of methodical and self-disciplined life. The idea took shape in such foundations as the Theological Colleges of Wells, Cuddesdon, Sarum, and Ely, the *Scholæ Cancellarii*

at Lincoln, and the Clergy School at Leeds. Fighting their way through all manner of strange misrepresentations about Monasticism and Mediævalism, they have in the course of years attained to recognition, popularity, and apparent stability. The bishops patronize them warmly, and incumbents who desire curates not wholly ignorant of their craft are increasingly unwilling to engage one who has not passed through a Theological College. That the broad result of the training given in these seminaries is a general increase in clerical efficiency I cannot doubt, but perhaps a layman may be permitted to point out some curious gaps and lapses in that training which go some way towards making clergymen less esteemed, and therefore less influential, than they ought to be.

1. The Clergy are not taught to be courteous. If they are courteous by nature and habit, well and good ; but a rough Undergraduate, destitute of sympathy and tact and ignorant of social usage, passes through a Theological College and comes out as rough as he entered it. A Bear in Holy Orders is as destructive as a Bull in a China Shop.

2. The Clergy are not taught to manage money ; they muddle their public accounts ; they beg money for one object and use it for another ; they seldom acknowledge what they receive by post ; and they have absolutely no notion of cutting their coat according to their cloth. "Spend and

beg, and the money will come from somewhere" is their simple and sufficient creed.

3. The Clergy are not taught business. They have not the faintest notion of conducting a public meeting. They lose their way in the agenda-paper of the most insignificant committee. They break appointments at their will and pleasure. They seldom answer letters, and are frankly astonished when their correspondents are annoyed.

4. The Clergy are not taught the Science of Citizenship. Outside their strictly professional studies (and, in some cases, the records of athleticism) they are the most ignorant set of young men in the world. They work hard and play hard, but they never read. They know nothing of books, nothing of history, nothing of the Constitution under which they live, of the principles and records of political parties, of the need for social reform or the means of securing it. They have a vague but clinging notion that Radicals are Infidels, and that Dissenters, if they got their deserts, would have their heads punched.

Sixty years ago an Italian critic said that, in spite of all their defects, the English clergy were "Un clero colto e civile." Could as much be said to-day?

## XIV

### PILGRIMAGES

I USE the word in something wider than Chaucer's sense, and yet in a sense not wholly different from his. For, though we no longer make an annual visit to the Shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury, still we all feel bound, at least once a year, to go somewhere and do something quite out of our normal course. Perhaps, like Chaucer's friends, we "long" to do this in April, but the claims of business are generally too strong for us; so we have to content ourselves with admiring the peeps of greenery which begin to invade the soot of our urban gardens, and, if we are of a cultured habit, we can always quote Browning's Thrush or strain the kalendar so as to admit Wordsworth's Daffodils.

This notion of a yearly Pilgrimage as a necessity of rightly-ordered life seems to have fallen into a long abeyance. "Dan Chaucer" (for I love to be on easy terms with great men) described the social customs of the fourteenth century, and then the Pilgrimage seems to have been an established institution: "Tom Hughes" described those of

the eighteenth, and this is what, writing in 1862, he says about the annual Pilgrimages of his own time :—

“I have been credibly informed, and am inclined to believe, that the various Boards of Directors of Railway Companies agreed together some ten years back to buy up the learned profession of Medicine, body and soul. To this end they set apart several millions of money, which they continually distribute judiciously among the Doctors, stipulating only this one thing—that they shall prescribe change of air to every patient who can pay, or borrow money to pay, a railway fare, and see their prescription carried out. If it be not for this, why is it that none of us can be well at home for a year together? It wasn't so twenty years ago—not a bit of it. The Browns did not go out of the county once in five years.”

The Browns, as we all know, stood in Mr. Hughes's vocabulary for the Upper Middle Class of England—the class to which the clergy, the smaller squires, and the professional men belong; the class which in Chaucer's time contained the “Man of Lawe,” the “Marchande,” the “Franklyne,” and the “Doctore of Phisyke”; and, although Mr. Hughes, who ought to know, says that in the earlier part of Queen Victoria's reign they were a stay-at-home class, they are now the most regular and the most zealous of Pilgrims. It was the majestic misfortune of the Duke in



“Lothair” to have so many houses that he had no home. People so circumstanced do not need to go on Pilgrimages. After the autumn in a Scotch Castle, the winter in a country house in the Midlands, the spring in another in the Southern Counties, and the season in Grosvenor Square, people are glad of a little rest, and seek it in some “proud alcove” on the Thames or a sea-girt villa at Cowes. Unless their livers drive them to Carlsbad or their hearts to Nauheim, they do not travel, but display what Lord Beaconsfield called “the sustained splendour of their stately lives” in the many mansions which, in the aggregate, represent to them the idea of Home. I might perhaps on another occasion sketch the Grand Tour of Europe, on which, for educational purposes, the Earl of Fitzurse used to send his eldest son, young Lord Cubley; compressed, with his tutor and doctor, into a travelling-carriage, with a valet and a courier in the rumble. The Duke of Argyll’s Autobiography has just told us what this kind of Pilgrimage was like; but to-day I am dealing with the present rather than the past.

It is the people with one house who go on Pilgrimages nowadays—the impoverished squire, the smoke-dried clergyman, the exhausted merchant, the harried editor. To these must be added all the inhabitants, male and female, of Lodging-land and Flat-land,—all “the dim, common populations” of Stuccovia and Suburbia. There

are mysterious laws of association which connect classes with localities. Tradesmen love Margate ; to clerks Scarborough is dear. The Semitic financier has long claimed Brighton for his own. Costermongers go hop-picking in Kent ; artizans disport themselves on the nigger-haunted pier of Southend. Governed by some mysterious law of their being, schoolmasters make straight for the Alps. There they live the strenuous life and brave the perilous ascent ; climb and puff and pant all day ; rush in, very untidy and not very clean, to *table d'hôte* ; and season their meal with the "shop" of St. Winifred's or the gay banter of Rosslyn Common-room. It is agreeable to watch the forced cordiality, the thin tutorial humour, with which they greet some quite irresponsive pupil who happens to have strayed into the same hotel ; and I have often had occasion to admire the precocious dexterity with which the pupil extricates himself from this dreaded companionship. Of Mr. Gladstone it was said by his detractors that he had something of the Schoolmaster in his composition ; and this trait was aptly illustrated when, during the summer holidays some fifty years ago, he met the late Duchess of Abercorn in a country house accompanied by her schoolboy son, Lord George Hamilton. Not many mornings had elapsed before Mr. Gladstone said to the boy's mother, "Duchess, don't you think it a pity that your son should spend his holidays in entire idle-

ness? I should be happy to give him an hour's Homer every morning." The offer was accepted, and the foundation of Lord George's lifelong hostility to the Liberal leader was securely laid. It is the nervous dread of some such awful possibility which supplies wings to the boy's feet and lies to his tongue when he encounters Dr. Grimstone or Basil Warde in a Swiss hotel.

While the Schoolmaster limits his aspirations to the Alps, the Oxford or Cambridge Don, having a longer vacation at his command, takes a more extended view, and urges his adventurous Pilgrimage along roads less trite. A few years ago an Oxford Don resolved to strike out what was then a quite new line, and spend his Long Vacation in Portugal. Conscious of insufficient acquaintance with the Portuguese language, he repaired to Mr. Parker's excellent shop in the Turl and enquired for a Portuguese Phrase-book. After some research, that never-failing bookseller produced "The New Guide of the Conversation in Portuguese and English." The book had an instant and a deserved success. The preface sets forth that "a choice of familiar dialogues, clean of gallicisms and despoiled phrases, it was missing yet to studious Portuguese and Brazilian youth; and also to persons of other nations that wish to know the Portuguese language." To supply this felt want Pedro Carolino compiled his hand-book for "the acceptation of the studious persons, and especially of the Youth,

at which we dedicate him particularly." Among those studious persons was our Pilgrim-Don, who naturally turned in the first instance to a dialogue headed

"FOR TO TRAVEL

When do you start ?

As soon as I shall have to finish a business at Cadiz.

Have you already arrested a coach ?

Yes, sir, and very cheap.

Have you great deal of effects ?

Two trunks and one portmanteau.

You may prepare all for to-morrow. We shall start at the coolness.

The way, is it good ?

Very good.

At which inn shall stop us ?

In that of the Sun, it is the best. The account mount is little. The supper, the bed, and the breakfast shall get up at thirty franks.

That seems to me a little dear."

The next dialogue follows in the natural order :—

"FOR TO BREAKFAST

John, bring us some thing for to breakfast.

Yes, sir ; there is some sausages and some meat pies. Will you that I bring the ham ?

Yes, bring him, we will cut a steak.

Put an nappe cloth upon this table.

Give us some plates, any knives, and some forks, rinse the glasses.

I have eaten with satisfaction some pudding, sausages, and some ham. I shall take some tea.

Still a not her cup ?

I thank you it is enough."

Breakfast over, the traveller engages a guide and starts out

#### "FOR TO SEE THE TOWN

We won't to see all that is it remarquable here.

Come with me, if you please. I shall not folget nothing what can to merit your attention. Here we are near to cathedrally. Will you come in there ?

We will first go to see him in oudside, after we shall go in there for to look the interior."

A day of sight-seeing concludes happily with the ever-welcome dialogue—

#### "FOR TO DINE

Give us a rice soup.

What wine do you like best ?

Bourgogne wine.

Give us some beef and potatoes, a beefsteak to the English.

What you shall take for dessert ?

Give us some Hollande cheese and some prunes.

I will take a glass of brandy at the cherries.

Gentlemen, don't forget the waiter."

Parsimony is a bond which makes the whole world kin, and it is interesting to find embedded in 182 closely-printed pages of "despoiled phrases" two such characteristic specimens of sound English as "That seems to me a little dear" and "Don't forget the waiter."

## XV

### THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"GENTLEMEN," said Dr. Blimber to his pupils on the eve of the holidays, "we will resume our studies on the twenty-fifth of next month." But that adjournment, I think, was for Christmas, and we are now in what Matthew Arnold's delicious schoolboy called "the glad season of sun and flowers." Very soon, in Dr. Farrar's romantic phrase, "the young life which usually plays like the sunshine over St. Winifred's will be pouring unwonted brightness into many happy English homes." Or, to take Mr. Snawley's darker view of the same event, we shall be in the thick of one of "those ill-judged comings home twice a year that unsettle children's minds so."

The associations of the moment, so different in their effects on different natures, have awoken the spirit of prophecy in the late Head Master of Eton, Dr. Warre, who, projecting his soul into futurity, sees dark days coming for the "Public Schools" as that phrase has been hitherto understood. It was clear, said Dr. Warre, after distributing the prizes at Shrewsbury, "that ere long

the Public Schools would have to justify not only their *curriculum*, but, it might be, their very existence. The spirit of the age seemed to be inclined towards Utilitarianism, and it was now tending to undervalue the humanities and the culture that attended them, and to demand what it appreciated as a useful and practical training—*i.e.* something capable of making boys bread-winners as soon as they left school. He did not say that view would ultimately prevail, but the trend of public opinion in that direction would necessitate on the part of Public Schools a period of self-criticism, and very probably a reorganization of *curricula*. But there was another problem to be faced which would become more serious as the century waxed older, and that was a new phase of competition. As secondary education expanded, secondary day-schools would be provided regardless of expense, and it was idle to think this would have no effect upon great Public Schools. What would be weighed in the balance, however, was the value of the corporate life and aggregate influence of the Public Schools upon the formation of character."

When ex-Head Masters begin to see visions and Old Etonians to dream dreams, the ordinary citizen, with his traditional belief in the virtue and permanence of Public Schools, must rub his eyes in astonishment. What is going to happen next? Is Eton to abandon "taste" and take to



“useful knowledge”? Is Harrow to close its Boarding Houses and become a village Day School once more? Are Wykeham’s “seventy faithful boys” (as the late Lord Selborne called them in his first attempt at verse) no longer to “tund” or be “tunded”? Is Westminster to forswear its Latin Play, and replace the “Phormio” and the “Trinummus” with “Box and Cox” and “Ici on Parle Français”?

These enquiries, and others like them, are forced on our attention by such subversive discourse as Dr. Warre’s; and that incursion of rampant boyhood which begins with the beginning of August reinforces the eloquence of the ex-Head Master. The Retreat of the Ten Thousand, which used to worry us in our youth, was not half so formidable an affair as the Advance of the Ten Thousand, schoolboys though they be, who just now overrun the land. There they are, an army ever increasing in numbers and maintained at an immense expense. Whatever commercial and agricultural depression may have effected in other quarters, it did not touch the schools of England. The greater schools are full to overflowing; provincial schools have doubled and trebled their numbers; and every Elizabethan and Edwardian foundation in the Kingdom has woken from slumber and celebrated at least a Tercentenary. And all this is not done for nothing. Private schoolmasters take shootings in Scotland; the pro-

prietors of Boarding-houses at the Public Schools buy villas in the Riviera, and build pineries and vineries at home; meanwhile the British Parent eyes his diminishing income and his increasing rates, and asks himself, in the secrecy of his own heart, what Tommy is really getting in return for the £200 a year expended on his education. The answer takes various forms. Perhaps Tommy is following the "grand, old fortifying classical curriculum" which sufficed for Lord Lumpington, and enabled the Rev. Esau Hittall to compose his celebrated "Longs and Shorts on the Calydonian Boar." In this case the parent says, with Rawdon Crawley, "Stick to it, my boy; there's nothing like a good classical education—nothing," but he generally is too diffident about his own accomplishments to subject his sons to a very searching test. Perhaps one boy in a hundred learns enough Latin and Greek at school to fit him for a good place in the Classical Tripos or a "First in Mods." This, if he is meant to be a schoolmaster, is a definite and tangible result from his father's investment; if he is intended for any other profession the advantage is not so clear. If he is to be a Soldier, no doubt there is the "Army Class" or the "Modern School," where, indeed, he is exempted from Greek, is taught some mathematics, and acquires some very English French and German; but, in spite of these privileges, he generally requires a year's residence at a

crammer's before he has a chance for Sandhurst. For the ordinary life of the Professions the Public School makes no preparation whatever. Tommy may have acquired "taste," but he is no more qualified to be, as Dr. Warre says, a "breadwinner" than he was the day he began school-life.

Matthew Arnold, in his delightful essay on "An Eton Boy," says, with regard to that boy's prowess as Master of the Beagles:—

"The aged Barbarian will, upon this, admirably mumble to us his story how the Battle of Waterloo was won in the Playing Fields of Eton. Alas! disasters have been prepared in those Playing Fields as well as victories—disasters due to an inadequate mental training, to want of application, knowledge, intelligence, lucidity."

With "taste" we commonly hear "tone" combined in the eulogies of Public Schools. The Parent, who knows (though he would not for the world admit) that Tommy has learnt nothing at St. Winifred's or Rosslyn which will ever enable him to earn a penny, falls back upon the impalpable consolation that there is "a very nice tone about the school." Certainly Eton imparts manners to those who have not acquired them at home, and in this respect Radley is like unto it. But, taking the Public Schools as a whole, it can scarcely be denied that, however faithfully they cultivate the ingenuous arts, they suffer Youth to be extremely

brutal. If this be urged, the Parent will shift his ground and say, "Well, I like boys to be natural. I don't wish my son to be a Lord Chesterfield. Character is everything. It is the religious and moral influence of a Public School that I think so valuable." As to the Religion taught in Public Schools, it is, as Mr. T. E. Page of Charterhouse recently said with artless candour, exactly the same commodity as will probably be offered by the County Councils when the Education Bill has become law ; and it is worth noting that, though Bishops shrink with horror at the prospect of this religion being offered to the poor, they are perfectly content that it should be crammed down the throats of their own sons. As to the morality acquired at Public Schools, a clergyman who was successively an Eton boy and an Eton master wrote twenty-five years ago : "The masters of many schools are sitting on a volcano, which, when it explodes, will fill with horror and alarm those who do not know what boys' schools are, or knowing it, shut their eyes and stop their ears." It must be admitted that the British Parent, dwelling on the slopes of that volcano, regards its chronic menace and its periodical activities with the most singular composure.

In years gone by Harrow, like most other places where there was a Public School accessible to day boys, was a favourite resort of widowed ladies whose husbands had served in the Indian Army

or Civil Service. These "Indian Widows," as he called them, so pestered Dr. Vaughan, then Head Master, that he said in the bitterness of his soul: "Before I came to Harrow I thought 'Suttee' an abomination; but now I see that there is a great deal to be said for it." It is easy enough to see why Head Masters dislike the Home Boarding system. It defeats the curious policy by which assistant masters pay themselves out of their boarders' stomachs, and it brings all the arrangements of teaching and discipline under the survey, and perhaps criticism, of the parents; but, in spite of magisterial objections, the Home Boarding system is probably the only and certainly the most efficacious method of coping with those moral evils which all schoolmasters not wilfully blind acknowledge, and which the best of them strenuously combat. In that extension of Day Schools which Dr. Warre foresees lies the best hope of a higher tone in public education.

The British Parent knows the weaknesses of the Public School system. He knows that he gets a very doubtful return for his money—that his son learns nothing useful and very little that is ornamental; is unsuitably fed, and, when ill, insufficiently attended; exposed to moral risks of a very grave type; and withdrawn at the most impressible season of life from the sanctifying influences of Motherhood and Home. He knows all this, and, knowing it, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred

he sends all his boys to a Public School. Why? Partly because every one goes to a Public School and he has no wish to be eccentric or faddish; partly because the boys are tiresome at home and he wants peace; partly because, in existing conditions, he does not know how to get them educated while they are under his roof. But the strongest reason is none of these. He sends his sons to Eton or Harrow because he was there himself, has felt the glamour and learnt the spell; because some of his happiest memories hover round the Playing Fields or the Hill; because there he first knew what Friendship meant and first tasted the Romance of Life.

“ I may have failed, my School may fail ;  
I tremble, but thus much I dare :  
I love her. Let the critics rail,  
My brethren and my home are there.”

## XVI

### SCHOOLS AND BOARDING-HOUSES

“ANY two meals at a Boarding-House are together less than one square meal.” This pleasing postulate was, I believe, in the first instance evolved from the bitter experience of a hungry mathematician who, at this season of the year, sought change of air and scene at Margate or Herne Bay. But to-day I use the word “Boarding-House” in that more restricted sense which signifies a Master’s house for the accommodation of boys at a Public School. My reason for discussing the subject is that a stray sentence in my last chapter, about the profits derived from such Boarding-Houses, caused dire offence. I am the most docile creature alive, and the rebukes which I have incurred caused me, as the French say, to make a return upon myself. I subjected my conscience to severe cross-examination. I asked whether what I had written was wholly or even approximately true, or entirely false; and whether, if true, it was offensive or indelicate. Here is the sentence in all its un-glossed brutality: “The proprietors of Boarding-

Houses at the Public Schools buy villas in the Riviera and build pineries and vineries at home." Now, of course, a Schoolmaster is nothing if not critical, and, in superintending the studies of his young friends, he rightly insists on the most scrupulous accuracy of phrase and figure. Not for the construing boy is the plea, dear to Biblical critics, that "the wider divergence is the higher unity." The calculating boy must not, if he values his peace, mistake inference for demonstration. Woe betide the excuse-making boy if he protests that he has spent an hour over his lesson when his tutor can show that he could only have spent fifty-five minutes. This Chinese exactness is all very well in the schoolroom, but tends to become a bore in the intercourse of social life. An Assistant Master, stung into activity by my recent strictures on Public Schools, has swooped down upon me with all the fierce alacrity which he would display in detecting a false quantity or an erroneous deduction. "Villas in the Riviera! Who buys Villas in the Riviera? Give, name, date, and place by return of post, or—write out five hundred lines." "What do you mean by Pineries and Vineries? I and my colleagues at St. Winifred's only grow cucumbers; and the Composition-Master, though he has large private means, gets his grapes from the Stores. Retract and apologize, or be for ever fallen."

Now really, when I read all this virtuous indig-



nation, I am irresistibly reminded of the Bishop in "Little Dorrit," who, when all the guests were extolling Mr. Merdle's wealth, spoke pensively about "the goods of this world," and "tried to look as if he were rather poor himself." In vain I protested that I meant no injurious allusion to Monte Carlo, and proposed to substitute "Mansions in the Isle of Wight" for "Villas in the Riviera." The substitution availed me nothing. "You say 'Mansions.' Do you really know more than one? And how do you know that the schoolmaster who bought it did not marry a wife with a fortune? You cannot investigate his marriage settlements, so your illustration counts for nothing." In the same conciliatory spirit, I urged that "Pineries and Vineries" was a picturesque phrase invented by Lord Randolph Churchill to describe the amenities of a comfortable country house, not of the largest order; but my pedagogue was not to be pacified. "If you didn't mean Pineries and Vineries, you shouldn't have said so. It creates a bad impression in the parents' minds. Of course no reasonable person could object to one's having gardens, or stabling, or a moderate shooting, or a share of a salmon river; but parents don't like the notion that we are living in luxury. They have a nasty way of contrasting it with the nonsense which their boys tell them about tough meat and rancid butter."

At this point I began to see some resemblance

between my correspondent and Matthew Arnold's critic in the *Quarterly* of October 1868—"one of the Eton Under-Masters, who, like Demetrius the Silversmith, seems alarmed for the gains of his occupation." For, in spite of all corrections and deductions, I cannot help regarding Public Schoolmasters as a well-paid race. Of course, it is true that their incomes are not comparable to those of successful barristers or surgeons, or even Ministers of State; but, on the other side, their work is infinitely easier; their earnings begin from the day on which they embark on their profession; and no revolution of the wheel of State can shake them from their well-cushioned seats. I am quite willing to admit that, on the figures supplied by my correspondent, he and his colleagues at St. Winifred's are not making so much money as their predecessors made twenty or thirty years ago. But, as far as I can understand, this diminution of incomes does not arise from diminution of charges, but only from the fact that the force of public opinion has driven schoolmasters to recognize, rather more fully than in days gone by, some primary needs of boy-nature. When the Royal Commission of 1862 was enquiring into the boarding arrangements of a famous school, one of the Commissioners was astonished to find that, in spite of the liberal charge for board, the boys got nothing but tea and bread and butter for breakfast. Apparently wishing to let the masters down easy,

he suggested that perhaps eggs also were provided. To this suggestion the witness's answer was monumental: "Eggs, indeed, are not provided, but in some houses a large machine for boiling eggs is brought in every day; so that, if the boys bring their eggs, they are boiled for them." Surely the Master who first conceived this substitution of hardware for food deserved a permanent place among Social Economists; but "the bigots of this iron time," though they may not actually "have called his harmless art a crime," have resolved that, when a father pays £200 a year for his boy's schooling, the boy shall have something more substantial than bread and butter for breakfast. This reform alone, according to my correspondent, knocked some hundreds a year off each House-Master's income.

Then, again, as regards Sanitation. Here, certainly not before it was wanted, reform has made its appearance, and the injured House-Master has had to put his hand in his pocket. When I was at a Public School, in that Golden Age of Profits to which my correspondent looked back so wistfully, the sanitary arrangements were such as to defy description and stagger belief. In one Pupil-Room there was only the thickness of the boarded floor between the cesspool and the feet of the boys as they sat at lessons. In my own house, containing forty boarders, there were only two baths. In another, three and even

four boys were cooped together, by day as well as by night, in what would, in an ordinary house, be regarded as a smallish bedroom. Now all this is changed. Drainage is reconstructed; baths are multiplied; to each boy is secured a sufficient air-space at lessons and in sleep. The Sanitary Engineer is let loose every term—

“What pipes and air-shafts! What wild ecstasy!”

But the “ecstasy” is confined to the bosom of the Engineer as he draws up his little account, and the House-Master moans, like Mr. Mantalini, over the “Demnition Total.”

Yet another such deduction must be borne in mind. Volumes of nonsense have been written about the Fagging System. Sentimental writers have gushed over the beautiful relation which it establishes between Fag-Master and Fag. Some, greatly daring, have likened it to the relation of elder and younger brothers. Others, more historically minded, have tried to connect it with the usages of Chivalry and the services rendered by the Page to the Knight. As a matter of fact, it was, as “Jacob Omnium,” himself an Old Etonian, pointed out fifty years ago, “an affair of the breeches pocket.” As long as younger boys could be compelled (by whatever methods) to clean lamps and brush clothes and toast sausages and fill tubs for elder boys it was obvious that fewer servants were required. One of the most

brilliant Etonians now living has said that "to see a little boy performing, with infinite pains and hopeless inadequacy, the functions of a domestic servant, might have moved Democritus to tears and Heraclitus to laughter." That Fagging has its uses, more especially in the case of spoilt boys brought up in purse-proud homes, few Public Schoolmen will deny; but the British Parent tends increasingly to draw a distinction between the duties of a fag and those of a footman; and the wages-bill becomes an increasingly important item in the House-Master's expenditure.

What, then, is the conclusion of the whole matter? It is, as I have repeatedly said, that a Boarding-School, whether public or private, is not the ideal method of educating boys; but, pending that great increase of Day-Schools for the sons of the upper classes which Dr. Warre foresees, it is the only method practically available for the great majority of English parents. Whether the instruction imparted in the Public Schools is or is not worth the amount which it costs is a matter of opinion; and, indeed, as long as the parent (who, after all, has to pay) is satisfied, no one else need trouble himself about the question. As to domestic arrangements and provision for health and comfort, it may be frankly conceded that the Schoolboy of to-day is much better off than his father or even his elder brother was; and that the improvements in his lot have tended

to diminish the profits on which the House-Master used to grow rich.

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*P.S.*—Having the terrors of the ferule before my eyes, let me hasten to say, with all possible explicitness, that in my account of my correspondence with the outraged Schoolmaster, I have aimed at giving a general impression rather than a verbal transcript.

## XVII

### SQUARES

ALL true lovers of Lewis Carroll will remember that Hiawatha, when he went a-photographing, "pulled and pushed the joints and hinges" of his Camera,

"Till it looked all squares and oblongs,  
Like a complicated figure  
In the Second Book of Euclid."

But it is not of squares in the mathematical sense that I speak to-day, but rather of those enclosed spaces, most irregularly shaped and proportioned, which go by the name of "Squares" in London.

It is in sultry August that the value of these spaces is most clearly perceived; for now the better-disposed owners fling open the gates of their squares and suffer them to become, at least temporarily, the resting-places of the aged and decrepit, and the playgrounds of the children. To extend these benefits more widely and to secure them in perpetuity are objects for which civic reformers have long striven; and during the present session of Parliament<sup>1</sup> (for, as Dryasdust would remind us, Parliament is not prorogued

<sup>1</sup> August 1906.

but only adjourned) two Acts have been passed which may do something at least towards attaining the desired ends. One of these Acts provides that, in cases where "Open Spaces and Burial Grounds" are vested in Trustees, the Trustees may transfer them to the Local Authorities, to be maintained for the use and service of the public. The other forbids for all time the erection of buildings on certain squares and gardens which belong to private owners, those owners having consented to this curtailment of their powers. The conjunction of "Burial Grounds" with "Open Spaces" in the purview of the former Act has a rather lugubrious sound ; but in reality it points to one of the happiest changes which recent years have brought to London.

"A hemmed-in churchyard, pestiferous and obscene, whence malignant diseases are communicated to the bodies of our dear brothers and sisters who have not departed—here, in a beastly scrap of ground which a Turk would reject as a savage abomination and a Caffre would shudder at, they bring 'our dear brother here departed' to receive Christian burial. With houses looking on, on every side, save where a reeking little tunnel of a court gives access to the iron gate—with every villainy of life in action close on death and every poisonous element of death in action close on life,—here they lower our dear brother down a foot or two ; here sow him in corruption, to be raised



in corruption ; an avenging ghost at many a sick-beside ; a shameful testimony to future ages that civilization and barbarism walked this boastful island together."

When Dickens wrote that hideous description, worthy to be illustrated by Hogarth in his most realistic mood, he did not exaggerate—he could not exaggerate—the obscenity of burial-grounds in crowded cities. To-day they are green with turf and bright with flowers, and brighter still with the unconquerable merriment of childhood at play among the dim memorials of the forgotten dead. What is true of the particular spot which Dickens described is true all over London ; and the resting-places of the departed have been made oases of life and health in this arid wilderness of struggling and stifled humanity.

Though so much has been done in the way of making the Churchyards available for public uses, comparatively little has been done with the Squares ; and philosophers of the school erroneously called Cynical might account for this difference by the fact that, whereas the churchyards were generally in the hands of official trustees, such as Rectors, Churchwardens, Overseers, or Vestries, the principal squares of London are the private property of individual owners. Even the London Squares and Enclosures Act, just passed, illustrates the same principle. The preamble of the Act sets forth that in respect of

every Square or Enclosure with which it deals the consent of the owner has been obtained. In each case, therefore, the owner has consented to legislation which will prevent himself or his successors from building on what are now open spaces, and, so far, each owner concerned has shown himself a patriotic citizen and a well-wisher to posterity. But, when we come to examine the schedule of properties to which the Act applies, it is interesting to compare the number belonging to private persons with the number belonging to public bodies. The Act applies to sixty-four properties ; of these fifty-five belong to public bodies such as District Councils, Governors of Hospitals, and Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and nine to private persons, among whom it is pleasant to reckon one Liberal M.P., Sir John Dickson-Poynder, and, by way of balance, one Conservative peer, Lord Camden.

A further study of the Schedule reveals the instructive fact that, with two exceptions in the City of Westminster and one in the Borough of Kensington, none of the scheduled properties lie within areas which could by any stretch of terms be called wealthy, fashionable, or aristocratic. Public authorities in such districts as Camberwell and Lewisham—private owners in Islington and Woolwich—have willingly surrendered their rights for the benefit of the community ; but none of the great ground landlords have followed suit. The owners of Belgrave Square and Grosvenor Square

and Portman Square and Cavendish Square and Berkeley Square—the Squares, *par excellence*, of fashionable London—have kept their seigniorial rights untouched. Pascal told us of some very human but very unregenerate children who said “This dog belongs to *me*,” and “That place in the sun is *Mine*,” and Pascal’s comment was, “Behold, the beginning and the image of all usurpation upon earth!” Similarly, the human but unregenerate landowners of fashionable London say, as they survey their possessions, “This Square belongs to *me*,” “That place in the shade is *Mine*,” while the August sun beats down on the malodorous street, and tottering paupers peer wistfully at the benches under the plane trees, and street-boys flatten their noses against the iron railings and madly yearn for cricket-pitches so smooth and green.

Although these fashionable Squares are so sedulously guarded against the intrusion of outsiders, they are very little used by those who have the right of entrance. “Livery Servants and Dogs not admitted” is a legendary inscription which, in its substance, still operates. Here and there a nurse with a baby in her arms haunts the shade, or a parcel of older children play lawn-tennis or croquet to an accompaniment of chaff from envious street-boys. But, as a general rule, for twenty hours out of the twenty-four and for ten months out of the twelve the Squares are

absolutely vacant ; and one of the most reasonable reforms which I could conceive would be to convert them from private pleasure-grounds to public gardens, and to throw the cost of maintaining them in order and beauty on the London County Council.

As I said before, some Square-owners have, without waiting for legal compulsion, taken tentative steps towards this reform. The Trustees of Lincoln's Inn Fields, the largest and the shadiest of all London Squares, have made them over to the County Council, and, in the hot months of declining summer, the juvenile populations of Holborn and St. Giles play their breathless games where Babington was hanged and Russell beheaded. It was there that, on the 20th of July 1683, Sir Ralph Verney, riding out from London to his home in Buckinghamshire, "saw the scaffold making ready against Lord Russell's execution to-morrow—God help him, and save the country."

But if once we leave the utilities and amenities of the London Squares and begin to meddle with their antiquities, we shall soon overflow all reasonable limits. Bloomsbury Square still reeks (at least for those who know their "Barnaby Rudge") with the blood which was shed in the Gordon Riots. Grosvenor Square—the last district of London which clung to oil-lamps in hopeless resistance to the innovation of gas—embodies the more recent memory of the Cato Street Con-

spiracy. In Berkeley Square (from what is now Lord Rosebery's house) Sarah Child eloped, and annexed the name and the banking-house of Child to the Earldom of Jersey. In Portman Square Mrs. Montagu presided over her court of Blue-stockings and feasted the chimney-sweeps on May-day. In Manchester Square, under the roof which now houses the Wallace Collection, the dazzling beauty of Isabella Lady Hertford stirred the fatuous passion of George IV. In Cavendish Square, under the portico of Harcourt House, lately demolished, Disraeli said good-bye for ever to his confederate Lord George Bentinck. In Hanover Square, Chantrey's stately statue of William Pitt has looked down on a century of aristocratic weddings, ascending and descending the steps of St. George's Church. Sir George Trevelyan, commenting on a Valentine written by Macaulay for Lady Mary Stanhope, a great-niece of Pitt's, declares that "the allusion to the statue in Hanover Square is one of the happiest touches that can be found in Macaulay's writings," and that is a sufficient justification for quoting it:—

"Prophetic rage my bosom swells ;  
I taste the cake, I hear the bells !  
From Conduit Street the close array  
Of chariots barricades the way  
To where I see, with outstretched hand,  
Majestic, thy great kinsman stand,  
And half unbend his brow of pride,  
As welcoming so fair a bride."

## XVIII

### SUNDAY IN LONDON

IT is the middle of August, and there is nobody in London—except, of course, some four millions of people who do not count. There is nobody in London; and, most specially and noticeably, there is nobody in Church. Be it far from me to suggest that the Country Cousin and the Transatlantic Brother, who flood London in August and September, are persons of indevout habits. But they have their own methods and places of devotion (of which I may speak anon), and do not affect the Parish Churches, with which I am now concerned. I have excellent opportunities of judging; for, year in year out, in tropical heat or Arctic cold, my due feet never fail to walk the round of our Stuccovian churches, and I can testify that in August and September Vacancy and Depression reign unchallenged. Seats are empty. Galleries are locked. Collections sink to vanishing-point. The Vicar of St. Ursula's, Stucco Gardens, accompanied by his second wife, is sitting under a white umbrella at Dieppe, watching the aquatic gambols of his twofold family.

The Senior Curate is climbing in the Alps. The Junior Curate, who stroked his College Boat last year and was ordained at Trinity, officiates in agonies of self-conscious shyness which would draw tears from a stone. A temporary organist elicits undreamt-of harmonies. The organ-blower is getting his health in the hopfields. The choir-boys are let loose—

“On Brighton’s shingly beach, on Margate’s sand,  
Their voice out-pipes the roaring of the sea.”

The congregation represents the mere dregs and remnants of Stuccovia’s social prime. Poor we have none, and our rich are fled to Scotland or Norway, Homburg or Marienbad. The seats are sparsely tenanted by “stern-faced men” (like those who arrested Eugene Aram), whom business keeps in London when their hearts are on the moors; over-burdened mothers, with herds of restless schoolboys at home for the holidays and craving for more ardent delights than Stucco Gardens yield; decayed spinsters of the type of Volumnia Dedlock, who, having exhausted the hospitable patience of their ever-diminishing band of friends, are forced to the horrid necessity of spending the autumn in London. The only cheerful face in the church belongs to the Pew-opener, who, being impeded in the discharge of her function by arthritic rheumatism, is happiest when congregations are smallest and there are no

week-day services to "molest her ancient solitary reign."

. . . . .

Evensong is over. The organist is struggling with an inconceivable tune from "The English Hymnal" (for at St. Ursula's we are nothing if not up to date). The Curate, sicklied o'er with that indescribable horror which in his boating days he would have described as "The Needle," is furtively reperusing his manuscript before mounting the pulpit, and does not detect my craven flight as I slip through the baize door and disappear. It is characteristic of St. Ursula's that, even when empty, it is fusty; but this need surprise no one, for the architect was strong on a "scientific system of ventilation," and that, as we all know, means very little ventilation and an overwhelming amount of system.

However, my courageous flight has delivered me from asphyxiation, and, before returning to my modest Sunday supper of Paysandu Ox-tongue and sardines, I think that I will reinflate my lungs by a stroll round Hyde Park. There is a lovely redness in the western sky over the Serpentine Bridge, but it is still broad daylight. The sere and yellow turf of the Park is covered by some of those four millions who do not count and do not go to church, but who, apparently, are fond of sermons. At the end of each hundred yards I



come upon a preacher of some religious, social, or political gospel, and round each is gathered a crowd of listeners who follow his utterances with interested attention. When I think of St. Ursula's and the pavid Curate and my graceless flight, I protest that I am covered with shame as with a garment. But the wrong done in the church can be repaired in the Park. I have missed one sermon, but I will hear another. Unluckily, when these compunctious visitings seized me I was standing by a rostrum of heterodoxy. For all I know the preacher may have followers among my readers ; so, as I would not for the world wound even the least orthodox susceptibilities, I forbear to indicate the theory which he enounced. As he spoke, I seemed to live a former life over again ; for I had once before been present at an exactly similar preaching, in company, either bodily or spiritual, with my friend Mr. James Payn, and his comments on the scene revived themselves in my memory, even as the remote associations of Ellangowan reawoke in the consciousness of Harry Bertram when he returned from his wanderings, and gazed, bewildered, on his forgotten home. (Henceforward it is Payn that speaks.) The preacher of Heterodoxy was entirely without enthusiasm, nor did his oratory borrow any meretricious attractions from the Muse. It was a curious farrago of logic without reason and premisses without facts, and was certainly the

least popular, though not the least numerously attended, of all the competing sermons in the Park. Suddenly the preacher gave expression to a statement more monstrous than common, on which an old lady in the crowd, who had heretofore been listening with great complacency, exclaimed in horror, "I'm sure *this* ain't true Gospel," and immediately decamped. Up to that point, she had apparently been listening under the impression that the preacher belonged to her own blameless persuasion, and was in the blankest ignorance of all that he had been driving at.

But Sunday in London has religious attractions to offer besides those purveyed by St. Ursula's and Hyde Park. I said at the outset that the Country Cousin and the Transatlantic Brother have their own methods and places of devotion—their Mecca is St. Paul's Cathedral. One of the pleasantest ways of spending a Sunday evening in London is to join the pilgrim-throng. The great west doors of the Cathedral are flung wide open, as if to welcome the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Lord Mayor, and all at once we find ourselves, hushed and awestruck, in the illimitable perspective. Even the staunchest believer in Gothic as the only religious architecture may admit, with disloyalty to his faith, that every year St. Paul's becomes more like a place of Christian worship and less like a glorified Council-hall or an Imperial Senate-house. And it is seen at its

best in twilight. The shadows temper the garish splendour of mosaic and gold and electricity, and enhance the dominant sense of vastness and grandeur. And prayer ascends on the wings of music and sweet boy-voices ring, and the distant altar, with its gleaming lights, focuses the meaning and purpose of the whole. And then the great "Communion of Hymns" unites us all, American and English, Londoner and countryman, as citizens of a city not built with hands, patriots of a country which is not marked on the terrestrial globe. Bernard of Cluny and William Cowper and John Keble all contribute of their best. "Brief life is here our portion" seems to utter the real heart's desire of a tired-looking mechanic who stands by my side. "Hark, my soul!" seems to communicate its own intensity to the very tone and look of the people who are singing it. "Sun of my soul" is an evening prayer which sounds just as natural and as fitting in the inmost heart of London's crowd and grind and pressure as in the sweet solitude of the Hursley fields. In the pulpit a pale preacher, himself half worn-out before his prime by ten years' battle in a slum, is extolling the Cross as the test and strength and glory of human life—

"While at his feet the human ocean lay,  
And wave on wave rolled into space away."

A human stream indeed, of all sorts and conditions

—old men and maidens, young men and children, rich and poor, English and foreigners, sightseers and citizens, dapper clerks and toil-stained citizens and red-coated soldiers—all interested, and all at ease, and all at home at what Bishop Lightfoot called “the centre of the world’s concourse”—under the cross-crowned Dome of St. Paul’s.

## XIX

### A SUBURBAN SUNDAY

“IT seems to the writer of this history that the inhabitants of London are scarcely sufficiently sensible of the beauty of its environs. . . . With the exception of Constantinople, there is no city in the world that can for a moment enter into competition with it. For himself, though in his time something of a rambler, he is not ashamed in this respect to confess to a legitimate Cockney taste ; and for his part he does not know where life can flow on more pleasantly than in sight of Kensington Gardens, viewing the silver Thames winding by the bowers of Rosebank, or inhaling from its terraces the refined air of graceful Richmond. In exactly ten minutes it is in the power of every man to free himself from all the tumult of the world and find himself in a sublime sylvan solitude superior to the Cedars of Lebanon and inferior only in extent to the chestnut forests of Anatolia.”

The judicious critic will have little difficulty in assigning this vivid passage to the too-graphic pen of Lord Beaconsfield ; but he will also recognize

the fact that a description written in 1837 needs some modification when applied to 1906. The central solitude of London—Kensington Gardens—is still very much as it was. Just now, its dark foliage and dusky glades suggest all the romantic associations of Gustave Doré's forests, with a tall trooper of the Life Guards and a bashful nursery-maid, for a Red Cross Knight and an Enchanted Princess. If we go further afield and climb the uplands of Highgate and Hampstead, we look down upon a boundless and beautiful city dimly visible through a golden haze. But the difference between the environs of London now and the same environs when Lord Beaconsfield described them is that they are now united to the centre by an unbroken network of gaslit streets. The enormous increase in the population of London, which every year brings with it, fills up the gaps and spaces, and the metropolis is now a solid whole, with its circumference extending further and further every day into what a year ago was country. In other words, the suburbs are getting further off, and what are suburbs to-day will be town to-morrow; but still there are suburbs, and a Sunday spent in them is an interesting experience.

Yesterday the well-known stuffiness of St. Ursula's, combined with the kind hospitality of some suburban friends, drove me to spend my Sunday about ten miles from Stucco Square. It is a characteristic of people who live in suburbs

to believe that their lot is cast in a primæval solitude, and that, though the Dome of St. Paul's is plainly visible from their back gardens, the traveller who ventures to approach them needs explicit and intricate directions about routes and trains and changes and stations. The station for my friend's place was called by a name intensely suggestive of rurality—not exactly "Rosebank," but Rosebank will serve. Readers of Archbishop Temple's Life will remember that a clergyman, excusing himself for living a long way from his church, urged that it was only three miles as the crow flies, thereby drawing down on himself the implacable reply, "But you ain't a crow." In the same way I found that, though Rosebank is only ten miles from Stucco Square "as the crow flies," a human being seeking to approach it must first make a considerable journey to a central terminus, must then embark in a train which a tortoise might outstrip, must change twice, and must burrow through a sulphurous tunnel; and must even then run a considerable risk of being carried through Rosebank Station, which all self-respecting trains seem to ignore.

Faced by these difficulties, I again took counsel with Lord Beaconsfield. "'Tis the gondola of London,' exclaimed Lothair, as he leapt into a hansom, which he had previously observed to be well-horsed." My Gondolier was ready with his terms—a very liberal payment, several hours' rest,

his dinner and tea, and something extra for putting up his horse. Granted these preliminaries, he would "do the job on 'is 'ead." It would "be a little 'oliday to 'im." I in vain suggested that the opportunity of attending Divine Service twice at Rosebank Church might be regarded as part payment of his charge; he replied, with startling emphasis, that he didn't go into the country to go to church—not if he knew it; that, if I wanted him, I must take him on the terms proposed; and, further, that I mustn't mind starting early, for he wanted to get his horse down cool.

The Gondolier had his own way; and, while the sparrows were still twittering and the housemaids were taking in the milk and the Sunday paper, I was well on my road to Rosebank. This much I will concede to the curiosity of readers—that my road led me out of London in a south-easterly direction, by the Horseferry, where James II. dropped the Great Seal into the Thames, along the Old Kent Road, of which a modern minstrel sang; past Kennington Common, now a "Park," where the gallant Jacobites of '45 underwent the hideous doom of Treason, where the iron-shuttered windows still commemorate the Chartist rising of '48, and where Sackville Maine took his Sunday walk with Mrs. Sackville and old Mrs. Chuff. On past the "Hamlet of Dulwich," where Mr. Pickwick spent the last years of his honoured life, to Chislehurst,



where Napoleon III. hid his exiled head, and North Cray, where the tragedy of Lord Londonderry's death is not yet forgotten, and Shooters' Hill, where Jerry Cruncher stopped the coach with the terrifying message of "Recalled to Life." Now, as readers are sometimes unduly literal, and as I would not willingly involve any one in an hour's fruitless puzzling over a map, let me say that this itinerary is rather general than particular, and that, although the Gondolier pursued an extremely devious course and murmured when I suggested straighter paths, we did not touch all the above-mentioned places in our morning's drive. But evermore we tended south-eastwards, and evermore the houses grew imperceptibly less dignified. Stone and stucco we had left behind us on the northern side of the river, and now it was a boundless contiguity of brick—yellow brick, rather grimy,—small houses with porticos, slips of dusty garden between the front door and the road, and here and there a row of wayside trees. But everywhere gas, and everywhere *omnibi* (as the classical lady said,) and everywhere electric trams. Churches of every confession and every architecture lined the way, varied with Public-houses of many signs, Municipal Buildings of startling splendour (for Borough Councils have a flamboyant taste), and Swimming Baths and Public Libraries, and here and there a private Lunatic Asylum frowning behind suggestively solemn gates.

Now we are in a long and featureless street, with semi-detached houses on either hand, and a malodorous cab-stand and a four-faced clock. "Which way for Rosebank?" shouts the Gondolier. "The first to your left and then turn sharp to the right," bellows a responsive policeman. We follow the direction given, and suddenly we are there—not at Rosebank, but quite out of even Greater London. The street ends abruptly. Trams and trains and gas and shops are left behind, and all at once we are in the country. The road is lined with hedgerows, dusty indeed, but still alive. Elms of respectable dimensions look down upon big fields, with here and there an oak, and cows resting under it. At one turn of the road there is a recognizable odour of late-cut hay, and in the middle distance I distinctly perceive a turnip-field, out of which a covey of partridges might rise without surprising any one. We pull up and gaze around. Look where I will, I cannot see a house, nor even a cottage. Surely my friends have not played a practical joke on me and asked me to spend a day in an imaginary Paradise. The Gondolier looks at his perspiring horse, and mops his own brow, and gazes contemptuously on the landscape. "I should call this the world's end if I was arst," he says. "Blow'd if they've even got a Public 'Ouse." Suddenly the sound of a shrill bell bursts on the ear. The Gondolier, who is a humorist, says "Muffins."

I jump out of the gondola, and pursue the welcome tinkle round a sharp angle in the road. There I see, perched on the brow of a sandy knoll, a small tin building, which a belfry and a cross proclaim to be a church. Inside I discover the Oldest Inhabitant pulling the muffin-bell with cheerful assiduity. He is more than ready to talk, and his whole discourse is as countrified as if he lived a hundred miles from Charing Cross. "Yes, this is a main lonely place. There ain't many people lives about 'ere. Why, ten years ago it was all fields. Now there are some houses—not many. He lives in one himself. How far off? Well, a matter of a mile or so. He was born on the Squire's land; his father worked on the farm. Yes, he's lived here all his life. Remembers it before there was a Crystal Palace, and when there was no railways or nothing. He hasn't often been in the train, and has only been up to London two or three times. Who goes to the church? Well—not many, except the Squire's family and the school-children. Why was it built? Oh, the Squire wants to get some rich folks to live round about. He's ready to part with his land for building; and there's going to be a row of houses built just in front of the church. He reckons the people will be more likely to come now that there's a church for them to go to." And now the "ten-minutes" bell begins with livelier measure; the Oldest

Inhabitant shows me to a seat; and, on the stroke of eleven, a shrill "Amen" is heard in the vestry, and there enters a modest procession of surpliced schoolboys and a clergyman in a green stole. His sons and daughters, the wife of the Oldest Inhabitant, and the sisters of the choristers, from the congregation, eked out by myself and my friends from Rosebank, who arrive a little flushed and complain that they have been waiting for me. The "service is fully choral," as they say in accounts of fashionable weddings; the clergyman preaches against the Education Bill, and a collection (of copper) is made to defray the expenses of a meeting at the Albert Hall. It is pleasant to see that, even in these secluded districts, the watch-dogs of the Church are on the alert.

## XX

### WINE AND WATER

THE second and third words are added to the title in deference to the weather. One must be a hardened toper if, with the thermometer at 93 in the shade, one can find comfort in the thought of undiluted wine. Rather I would take pattern from Thackeray's friend the Bishop, with his "rounded episcopal apron." "He put water into his wine. Let us respect the moderation of the Established Church." But water is an after-thought, incidental and ephemeral. It was on wine that I was meditating when the mercury rushed up and put more temperate thoughts into my head, and it was Sir Victor Horsley who set me on thinking about wine. Sir Victor has been discoursing at Ontario about the mischiefs of Alcohol, and the perennial controversy has revived in all its accustomed vigour. Once every five years some leading light of the medical profession declares with much solemnity that Alcohol is a poison, that Wine is the foundation of death, and that Gingerbeer or

Toast-and-Water or Zoedone or Kopps or some kindred potion is the true and the sole elixir of life. Sir Oracle always chooses August or September for the delivery of his dogma, and immediately there ensues a correspondence which suitably replaces "Ought Women to Propose?" "Do We Believe?" and "What is Wrong?" Enthusiastic teetotallers fill the columns of the press with letters which in their dimensions rival the Enormous Gooseberry and in their demands on our credulity exceed the Sea Serpent. To these reply the advocates of Alcohol, with statistical accounts of patriarchs who always breakfasted on half-and-half, and near and dear relations who were rescued from the jaws of death by a timely exhibition of gin and bitters. And so the game goes merrily on till October recalls us to common sense.

Thus far, the gem of this autumn's correspondence is, I think, the following instance contributed by an opponent of Sir Victor Horsley:—

"A British officer lay on his camp-bed in India suffering from cholera. His medical attendants had concluded that nothing more could be done for him, and that his seizure must end fatally. His friends visited him to shake his hand and to offer their sympathetic good-byes, including his dearest regimental chum, who, deciding to keep his emotion down by assuming a cheerful de-

meanour, remarked, 'Well, old chap, we all must go sometime and somehow. Is there anything you would like me to get you?' Hardly able to speak, the sufferer indicated, 'I'll take a drop of champagne with you, as a last friendly act, if I can get it down.' With difficulty he took a little, and still lives to tell the story."

Since the "affecting instance of Colonel Snobley" we have had nothing quite so rich as that—unless, indeed, it was the thrill of loyal rejoicing which ran round the nation when, just before Christmas 1871, it was announced that our present Sovereign, then in the throes of typhoid, had called for a glass of beer. Then, like true Britons, reared on malt and hops, we felt that all was well, and addressed ourselves to our Christmas turkey with the comfortable assurance that the Prince of Wales had turned the corner. Reared on malt and hops, I said; but many other ingredients went to the system on which some of us were reared. "That poor creature, small beer" at meal-time, was reinforced by a glass of port wine at eleven, by brandy and water if ever one looked squeamish, by mulled claret at bedtime in cold weather, by champagne on all occasions of domestic festivity, and by hot elderberry wine if one had a cold in the head. Poison? quotha. It was like Fontenelle's coffee, and, even though some of us have not yet turned eighty, at any rate we were not

cut off untimely nor hurried into a drunkard's grave. And then think of the men whom the system produced! Thackeray (who knew what he was talking about) said that "our intellect ripens with good cheer and throws off surprising crops under the influence of that admirable liquid, claret." But all claret, according to Dr. Johnson, would be port if it could; and a catena of port wine-drinkers could contain some of the most famous names of the last century. Mr. Gladstone, to whom the other pleasures of the table meant nothing, was a stickler for port, a believer in it, a judge of it. The only feeble speech which, in my hearing, he ever made was made after dining at an otherwise hospitable house where wine was not suffered to appear. Lord Tennyson, until vanquished by Sir Andrew Clark, drank his bottle of port every day, and drank it undecanted, for, as he justly observed, a decanter holds only eight glasses, but a black bottle nine. Mr. Browning, if he could have his own way, drank port all through dinner as well as after it. Sir Moses Montefiore, who, as his kinsfolk said, got up to par—or, in other words, completed his hundred years,—had drunk a bottle of port every day since he came to man's estate. Dr. Charles Sumner, the last Prince-Bishop of Winchester, so comely and benign that he was called "The Beauty of Holiness," lent ecclesiastical sanction



to the same tradition by not only drinking port himself but distributing it with gracious generosity to impoverished clergy. But, if I were to sing all the praises of port, I should have no room for other wines.

Sherry—but no. Just now it is a point of literary honour not to talk about sherry;<sup>1</sup> so, Dante-like, I do not reason about that particular wine, but gaze and pass on—only remarking, as I pass, that Mr. Ruskin's handsome patrimony was made out of sherry, and that this circumstance lent a peculiar zest to his utterances from the professorial chair at Oxford about the immorality of Capital and "the sweet poison of misused wine." An enthusiastic clergyman who wore the Blue Ribbon had been urging on Archbishop Benson his own strong convictions about the wickedness of wine-drinking. That courtly prelate listened with tranquil sympathy till the orator stopped for breath, and then observed, in suavest accents, "And yet I always think that good claret tastes very like a good creature of God." There are many who, in the depths of their conscience, agree with his Grace; and they would drink claret and nothing but claret if they could get it at dinner. Far distant are the days when Lord Alvanley said, "The little wine I drink I drink at

<sup>1</sup> A correspondence on Sherry had just been running in the daily press.

dinner,—but the great deal of wine I drink I drink after dinner.” Nowadays no one drinks any after dinner. The King killed after-dinner drinking when he introduced cigarettes. But, for some inexplicable reason, men who have good claret will not produce it at dinner. They wait till the air is poisoned and the palate deadened with tobacco, and then complain that nobody drinks claret. The late Lord Granville (who had spent so many years of his life in taking the chair at public dinners that his friends called him *Père La Chaise*) once told me that, where you are not sure of your beverages, it was always safest to drink hock. So little was drunk in England that it was not worth while to adulterate it. Since those days the still wines of Mosel have flooded the country, and it is difficult to repress the conviction that the principal vineyards must belong to the Medical Faculty, so persistently and so universally do they prescribe those rather dispiriting vintages.

But, after all said and done, when we in the twentieth century say Wine, we mean champagne, even as our fathers meant port. And in champagne we have seen a silent but epoch-making revolution. I well remember the champagne of my youth ; a liquid esteemed more precious than gold, and dribbled out into saucer-shaped glasses half-way through dinner on occasions of high ceremony. It was thick and sticky ; in colour a

sort of brick-dust red, and it scarcely bubbled, let alone foaming or sparkling.

“How sad, and bad, and mad it was,—  
And oh! how it was sweet!”

Nowadays, we are told, more champagne is drunk in Russia than is grown in France. And the “foaming grape,” which Tennyson glorified, is so copiously diluted that it ranks only immediately above small beer in the scale of alcoholic strength. Mr. Finching, the wine-merchant in “Little Dorrit,” thought it “weak but palatable,” and Lord St. Jerome in “Lothair” was esteemed by the young men a “patriot,” “because he always gave his best champagne at his ball suppers.” Such patriotism as that, at any rate, is not the refuge of a scoundrel.

*Wine and Water.* I return to my beginnings, and, as I ponder the innocuous theme, all sorts of apt citations come crowding on the Ear of Memory. Bards of every age and clime have sung the praises of wine, but songs in praise of water are more difficult to find. Once on a time, when a Maid of Honour had performed a rather mild air on the piano, Queen Victoria asked her what it was called. “A German Drinking-Song, ma’am.” “Drinking-Song! One couldn’t drink a cup of tea to it.” A kindred feebleness seems to have beset all the poets who have tried to hymn the praises of water; nor was it over-

come till some quite recent singer, who had not forgotten his Pindar, thus improved on the immortal *Ariston men hudor* :—

“ Pure water is the best of gifts  
That man to man can bring ;  
But what am I, that I should have  
The best of anything ?

“ Let Princes revel at the Pump,  
Let Peers enjoy their tea ;<sup>1</sup>  
But whisky, beer, or even wine  
Is good enough for me.”

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<sup>1</sup> Some commentators read—“ Peers with the pond make free.”

## XXI

### DINNER

“ We may live without poetry, music, and art ;  
We may live without conscience and live without heart ;  
We may live without friends ; we may live without books ;  
But civilized man cannot live without Cooks.

“ He may live without lore—what is knowledge but  
grieving ?  
He may live without hope—what is hope but deceiving ?  
He may live without love—what is passion but pining ?  
But where is the man that can live without dining ? ”

THE poet who wrote those feeling lines acted up to what he professed, and would, I think, have been interested in our present subject ; for he it was who, in the mellow glory of his literary and social fame, said : “ It is many years since I felt hungry ; but, thank goodness, I am still greedy.” In my youth there used to be a story of a High Sheriff who, having sworn to keep the jury in a trial for felony locked up without food or drink till they had agreed upon their verdict, was told that one of them was faint and had asked for a glass of water. The High Sheriff went to the Judge and requested his directions. The Judge,

after due reflection, ruled as follows: "You have sworn not to give the jury food or drink till they have agreed upon their verdict. A glass of water certainly is not food; and, for my own part, I shouldn't call it drink. Yes; you can give the man a glass of water."

In a like spirit, I suppose that most of us would regard wine as being, if not of the essence, at least an inseparable accident, of Dinner; but the subject of wine has been so freely handled in a previous chapter that, though it is by no means exhausted, we will to-day treat it only incidentally, and as it presents itself in connexion with the majestic theme of Dinner.

The great Lord Holland, famed in Memoirs, was greater in nothing than in his quality of host; and, like all the truly great, he manifested all his noblest attributes on the humblest occasions. Thus, he was once entertaining a schoolboy, who had come to spend a whole holiday at Holland House, and, in the openness of his heart, he told the urchin that he might have what he liked for dinner. "Young in years, but in sage counsels old," as the divine Milton says, the Westminster boy demanded, not sausages and strawberry cream, but a roast duck with green peas, and an apricot tart. The delighted host brushed away a tear of sensibility, and said, "My boy, if in all the important questions of your life you decide as wisely as you have decided now, you will be a

great and a good man." The prophecy was verified, and surely the incident deserved to be embalmed in verse ; but, somehow, the poets always seem to have fought shy of Dinner. Byron, as might be expected, comes nearest to the proper inspiration when he writes of

" A roast and a ragout,  
And fish, and soup, by some side dishes back'd."

But even this is tepid. Owen Meredith, in the poem from which I have already quoted, gives some portion of a menu in metre. Sydney Smith, as we all know, wrote a recipe for a salad in heroic couplets. Prior, I think, describes a City Feast, bringing in "swan and bustard" to rhyme with "tart and custard." The late Mr. Mortimer Collins is believed to have been the only writer who ever put "cutlet" into a verse. When Rogers wrote "the rich relics of a well-spent hour" he was not—though he ought to have been—thinking of dinner. Shakespeare and Spenser, and Milton and Wordsworth, and Shelley and Tennyson deal only with fragments and fringes of the great subject. They mention a joint or a dish, a vintage or a draught, but do not harmonize and co-ordinate even such slight knowledge of gastronomy as they may be supposed to have possessed. In fact, the subject was too great for them, and they wisely left it to the more adequate medium of prose. Among the prose-poets who have had the true

feeling for Dinner, Thackeray stands supreme. When he describes it facetiously, as in "The Little Dinner at Timmins's" or "A Dinner in the City," he is good; but he is far, far better when he treats a serious theme seriously, as in "Memorials of Gormandizing" and "Greenwich Whitebait."

I assign the first place to Thackeray because his eulogy is more finished, more careful, more delicate; but Sir Walter had a fine, free style, a certain broadness of effect, in describing a dinner which places him high in the list. Those venison pasties and spatchcocked eels and butts of Rhenish wine and stoups of old Canary which figure so largely in the historical novels still make my mouth water. The dinner which Rob Roy gave Bailie Nicol Jarvie, though of necessity cold, was well conceived; and, barring the solan goose, I should have deeply enjoyed the banquet at which the Antiquary entertained Sir Arthur Wardour. The imaginary feast which Caleb Balderstone prepared for the Lord Keeper was so good that it deserved to be real. Dickens, the supreme exponent of High Tea, knew very little about Dinner, though I remember a good meal of the *bourgeois* type at the house of the Patriarch in "Little Dorrit." Lord Lytton dismissed even a bad dinner all too curtly when he said that "the soup was cold, the ice was hot, and everything in the house was sour except the vinegar." James



Payn left in his one unsuccessful book, "Melibœus in London," the best account, because the simplest, of a Fish-dinner at Greenwich; in that special department he is run close by Lord Beaconsfield in "Tancred"; but it is no disgrace to be equalled or even surpassed by the greatest man who ever described a dinner. With Lord Beaconsfield gastronomy was an instinct; it breathes in every page of his Letters to his Sister. He found a roast swan "very white and good." He dined out "to meet some truffles—very agreeable company." At Sir Robert Peel's he reported "the second course really remarkable," and noted the startling fact that Sir Robert "boldly attacked his turbot with his knife." It was he, I believe, who said of a rival Chancellor of the Exchequer that his soup was made from "deferred stock." 'Twere long to trace the same generous enthusiasm for Dinner through all Lord Beaconsfield's Novels. He knew the Kitchen of the Past as well as of the Present. Lady Annabel's Bill of Fare in "Venetia" is a monument of culinary scholarship. Is there anything in fiction more moving than the agony of the *chef* at Lord Montacute's coming of age? "It was only by the most desperate personal exertions that I rescued the *soufflés*. It was an affair of the Bridge of Arcola." And, if it be objected that all these scenes belong to a rather remote past, let us take this vignette of the fashionable solicitor in "Lothair," Mr. Putney

Giles, as he sits down to dinner after a day of exciting work: "It is a pleasant thing to see an opulent and prosperous man of business, sanguine and full of health and a little overworked, at that royal meal, Dinner. How he enjoys his soup! And how curious in his fish! How critical in his *entrée*, and how nice in his Welsh mutton! His exhausted brain rallies under the glass of dry sherry, and he realizes all his dreams with the aid of claret that has the true flavour of the violet." "Doctors," said Thackeray, who knew and loved them, "notoriously dine well. When my excellent friend Sangrado takes a bumper, and saying, with a shrug and a twinkle of his eye, *Video meliora proboque, Deteriora sequor*, tosses off the wine, I always ask the butler for a glass of that bottle." That tradition of medical gastronomy dates from a remote period of our history. "Culina," by far the richest Cookery-book ever composed, was edited and given to the world in 1810 by a doctor—"A. Hunter, M.D., F.R.S." Dr. William Kitchener died in 1827, but not before his "Cook's Oracle" and "Peptic Precepts" had secured him an undying fame. In our own days, Sir Henry Thompson's "Octaves" were the most famous dinners in London, both as regards food and wine; and his "Food and Feeding" is the best guide-book to greediness I know. But here I feel that I am descending into details. "Dear Bob, I have seen the mahoganies of many men."

But to-day I am treating of Dinner rather than of dinners—of the abstract Idea which has its real existence in a higher sphere,—not of the concrete forms in which it is embodied on this earth. Perhaps further on I may have a word to say about “Dinners.”

## XXII

### DINNERS

*Sero sed serio.* It is the motto of the House of Cecil; and the late Lord Salisbury, long detained by business at the Foreign Office and at length sitting down to his well-earned dinner, used to translate it—"Unpunctual, but hungry." Such a formula may suitably introduce the subject of our present meditations; and, although that subject is not temporary or ephemeral, but rather belongs to all time, still at this moment it is specially opportune. Sir James Crichton-Browne has been frightening us to death with dark tales of physical degeneration, and he has been heartless enough to do so just when we are reeling under the effects of Sir Victor Horsley's attack on Alcohol. Burke, in opposing a tax on gin, pleaded that "mankind have in every age called in some material assistance to their moral consolation." These modern men of science tell us that we must by no means call in gin or any of its more genteel kinsfolk in the great family of Alcohol. Water hardly seems to meet the case—besides, it has typhoid germs in it. Tea and coffee are

“nerve-stimulants,” and must therefore be avoided by a neurotic generation. Physical degeneracy, then, must be staved off with food; food, in a sound philosophy of life, means Dinner; and Dinner, the ideal or abstraction, reveals itself to man in the concrete form of Dinners.

Having thus formulated my theme, I part company, here and now, with poets and romancists and all that dreamy crew, and betake myself, like Mr. Gradgrind, to facts. In loftier phrase, I pursue the historic method, and narrate, with the accuracy of Freeman, though, alas! without the brilliancy of Froude, some of the actual dinners on which mankind has lived. Creasy wrote of the “Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World”—the Fifteen Decisive Dinners of the World would be a far more interesting theme; but the generous catalogue unrolls its scroll, and “fifteen” would have to be multiplied by ten or a hundred before the tale was told. A friend of mine had a pious habit of pasting into an album the *Menu* of every dinner at which he had enjoyed himself. Studying the album retrospectively, he used to put an asterisk against the most memorable of these records. There were three asterisks against the *Menu* of a dinner given by Lord Lyons at the British Embassy at Paris. “*Quails and Roman Punch*,” said my friend with tears in his voice. “You can’t get beyond that.” This evidently had been one of the Fifteen Decisive Dinners of

his gastronomic world. Did not the poet Young exclaim, in one of his most pietistic "Night Thoughts,"

"The undevout Gastronomer is mad"?

Or, has an unintended "G" crept into the line?

I treasure among my relics the "Bill of Fare" (for in those days we talked English) of a Tavern Dinner for seven persons, triumphantly eaten in 1751. Including vegetables and dessert, and excluding beverages, it comprises thirty-eight items; and the total cost was £81, 11s. 6d. (without counting the Waiter). Twenty years later than the date of this heroic feast Dr. Johnson, who certainly could do most things which required the use of a pen, vaunted in his overweening pride that he could write a cookery-book, and not only this, but "a better book of cookery than has ever yet been written; it should be a book on philosophical principles." The philosophical principles must have been those of the Stoic school if they could induce his readers or his guests to endure patiently such a dinner as he gave poor Bozzy on Easter-day, 1773—"a very good soup, a boiled leg of lamb and spinach, a veal pie, and a rice pudding." One is glad to know that the soup was good; for, as Sir Henry Thompson said in "Food and Feeding," "the *rationale* of the initial soup has been often discussed," and the best opinion is that the function of the soup is to

fortify the digestion against what is to come. A man who is to dine on boiled lamb, veal pie, and rice pudding needs all the fortifying he can get. With some of us it would indeed be a "decisive" dinner—the last which we should consume on this planet.

True enjoyment, as well as true virtue, lies in the Golden Mean ; and, as we round the corner where the eighteenth century meets the nineteenth, we begin to encounter a system of dining less profligately elaborate than the Tavern Dinner of 1751, and yet less poisonously crude than Dr. Johnson's Easter Dinner of 1773. The first Earl of Dudley (who died in 1833) disdained kickshaws, and, with manly simplicity, demanded only "a good soup, a small turbot, a neck of venison, ducklings with green peas (or chicken with asparagus), and an apricot tart." Even more meagre was the repast which Macaulay deemed sufficient for his own wants and those of a friend : "Ellis came to dinner at seven. I gave him a lobster curry, woodcock, and maccaroni." From such frugality, bordering on asceticism, it is a relief to turn to the more bounteous hospitality of Sir Robert Peel, of whose dinner the youthful Disraeli wrote : "It was curiously sumptuous ; every delicacy of the season, and the second course, of dried salmon, olives, caviare, woodcock pie, *foiegras*, and every combination of cured herring, &c., was really remarkable." Yes, indeed ! "on dine remarquablement chez vous."

After all, the social life of the capital naturally takes its tone and manner from the august centre round which it moves. If the Court dines well, so do those who frequent it. The legs of mutton and apple dumplings which satisfied the simple taste of George III. read now like a horrid dream. Perhaps, as the digestion and the brain are so closely connected, they helped to drive him mad. His sons ate more reasonably; and, in a later generation, gastronomic science in high places was quickened by the thoughtful intelligence of Prince Albert directing the practical skill of Francatelli and Moret. Here is a brief abstract or epitome of Queen Victoria's dinner on the 21st of September 1841. It begins modestly with two soups; it goes on, more daringly, to four kinds of fish; four also are the joints, followed (not, as now, preceded) by eight *entrées*. Then come chickens and partridges; vegetables, savouries, and sweets to the number of fifteen: and, lest any one should still suffer from the pangs of unsatiated desire, there were thoughtfully placed on the sideboard Roast Beef, Roast Mutton, Haunch of Venison, Hashed Venison, and *Riz au consommé*. But those were famous days. Fifty-four years had sped their course, and Her Majesty's Christmas Dinner in the year 1895 shows a lamentable shrinkage. Three soups indeed there were, but only one fish, and that a Fried Sole, which can be produced by kitchens less than Royal. To this



succeeded a beggarly array of four *entrées*, three joints, and two sorts of game ; but the *Menu* recovers itself a little in seven sweet dishes ; while the sideboard displayed the "Boar's Head, Baron of Beef, and Woodcock Pie," which supplied the thrifty Journalist with appropriate copy at every Christmas of Her Majesty's long reign.

When Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli had succeeded in "dishing the Whigs" by establishing Household Suffrage, they and their colleagues went with a light heart and a good conscience to dine at the Ship Hotel, Greenwich, on the 14th of August 1867. That was, in some senses, a "decisive" dinner, for it sealed the destruction of the old Conservatism and inaugurated the reign of Tory Democracy. The triumphant Ministers had turtle soup, eleven kinds of fish, two *entrées*, a haunch of venison, poultry, ham, grouse, leverets, five sweet dishes, and two kinds of ice. Eliminating the meat, this is very much the same sort of dinner as that at which Cardinal Wiseman was entertained by his co-religionists when he assumed the Archbishopric of Westminster, and I remember that his Life, by Mr. Wilfred Ward, records the dismay with which his "maigre" fare inspired more ascetic temperaments. "He kept the table of a Roman Cardinal, and surprised some Puseyite guests by four courses of fish in Lent." There is something very touching in the exculpatory language of his friend and disciple Father Faber—

"The dear Cardinal had a Lobster-salad side to his character."

Ever since the days of Burns, the "chiel amang ye takin' notes" has been an unpopular character, and not without reason, as the following extract shows. Mr. John Evelyn Denison (afterwards Lord Eversley) was Speaker of the House of Commons in 1865, and on the eve of the opening of the Session he dined, according to custom, with Lord Palmerston, then Prime Minister and Leader of the House. Lord Palmerston was in his eighty-first year and gouty. Political issues of the gravest importance hung on his life. The Speaker, like a *rusé* old politician as he was, kept a cold grey eye on Palmerston's performance at dinner, regarding it, rightly, as an index to his state of health; and this was what he reported about his host's capacities: "His dinner consisted of turtle soup, fish, patties, fricandeau, a third *entrée*, a slice of roast mutton, a second slice, a slice of hard-looking ham. In the second course, pheasant, pudding, jelly. At dessert, dressed oranges and half a large pear. He drank seltzer water only, but late in the dinner one glass of sweet champagne, and, I think, a glass of sherry at dessert." This was one of the "decisive" dinners, for Palmerston died in the following October. The only wonder is that he lived so long. The dinner which killed the Duke of Wellington was a cold pie and a salad.

"I am not one who much or oft delight" to

mingle the serious work of Dinner with the frivolities of Literature ; but other people, more prone to levity, are fond of constructing Bills of Fare out of Shakespeare ; and our National Bard is so copious in good eating and drinking that a dozen *Menus* might be bodied forth from his immortal page. The most elaborate of these attempts took place in New York on the 23rd of April 1860. The Bill of Fare lies before me as I write. It contains twenty-four items, and an appropriate quotation is annexed to each. The principal joint was Roast Lamb, and to this is attached the tag—

“Innocent  
As is the sucking lamb.”

When the late Professor Thorold Rogers, an excellent Shakespearean, saw this citation, he exclaimed, “That was an opportunity missed. They should have put—

‘So young, and so untender!’”

## XXIII

### LUNCHEON

“ Munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,  
Breakfast, dinner, supper, luncheon ! ”

So sings, or says, Robert Browning in his ditty of the Pied Piper, and it is to be remarked that he was not driven to invent the word “ nuncheon ” by the necessity of finding a rhyme for “ luncheon,” for “ puncheon ” was ready to his hand, and “ nuncheon ” was not a creation, but an archaism, defined by Johnson as “ food eaten between meals.” Let no one who perpend the amazing dinners eaten by our forefathers accuse those good men of gluttony. Let us rather bethink ourselves of their early and unsatisfying breakfasts, their lives of strenuous labour, their ignorance of five o'clock tea ; and then thank the goodness and the grace which on our birth have smiled, and have given us more frequent meals and less ponderous dinners. Lord John Russell (1792-1878) published anonymously in 1820 a book of Essays and Sketches “ by a Gentleman who has left his Lodgings.” On the usages of polite society at the time no one was better qualified to speak, for Woburn Abbey

was his home, and at Bowood and Holland House he was an habitual guest ; and this is his testimony to the dining habits of society : "The great inconvenience of a London life is the late hour of dinner. To pass the day *impransus* and then to sit down to a great dinner at eight o'clock is entirely against the first dictates of common sense and common stomachs. Women, however, are not so irrational as men, and generally sit down to a substantial luncheon at three or four ; if men would do the same, the meal at night might be lightened of many of its weighty dishes and conversation would be no loser." So far, Luncheon (or Nuncheon) would seem to be exclusively a ladies' meal ; and yet Dr. Kitchener could not have been prescribing for ladies only when he gave his surprising directions for a luncheon "about twelve," which might "consist of a bit of roasted Poultry, a basin of Beef Tea or Eggs poached or boiled in the shell, Fish plainly dressed, or a Sandwich ; stale Bread, and half a pint of good Home-brewed Beer, or Toast and Water, with about one fourth or one-third part of its measure of Wine, of which Port is preferred, or one-seventh of Brandy."

In Miss Austen's books, Luncheon is dismissed under the cursory appellation of "Cold Meat," and Madeira and water seems to have been its accompaniment ; but more prodigal methods soon began to creep in. The repast which Sam Weller pronounced "a wery good notion of a lunch"

consisted of veal pie, bread, knuckle of ham, cold beef, beer, and cold punch ; and let it be observed in passing that, had he used the word " lunch " in polite society, the omission of the second syllable would have been severely reprehended by a generation which still spoke of the " omnibus " and had only just discontinued " cabriolet." The verb " to lunch " was even more offensive than the substantive from which it was derived ; and Lord Beaconsfield, describing the Season of 1832, says that " ladies were luncheoning on Perigord pie, or coursing in whirling britskas." To Perigord pies as a luncheon dish for the luxurious and eupeptic may be added venison pasties—

" Now broach me a cask of Malvoisie,  
Bring pasty from the doe,"

said the Duchess in " Coningsby." " That has been my luncheon—a poetic repast." And Lady St. Jerome, when she took Lothair to a picnic, fed him with lobster sandwiches and Chablis. Fiction is ever the mirror of fact ; and a lady still living, who published her Memoirs only a year or two ago, remembers the Lady Holland who patronized Macaulay " sitting at a beautiful luncheon of cold turkey and summer salad."

But, in spite of all these instances, Luncheon was down to 1840 or thereabouts a kind of clandestine and unofficial meal. The ladies wanted something to keep them up. It was nicer for the

children than having their dinner in the nursery. Papa would be kept at the House by an impending division, and must get a snack when he could—and so on and so forth. If a man habitually sate down to luncheon, and ate it through, he was contemned as unversed in the science of feeding. "Luncheon is a reflection on Breakfast and an insult to Dinner;" and moreover it stamped the eater as an idler. No one who had anything to do could find time for a square meal in the middle of the day. When Mr. Gladstone was at the Board of Trade, his only luncheon consisted of an Abernethy biscuit which Mrs. Gladstone brought down to the office and forced on the reluctant Vice-President.

But after 1840 a change set in. Prince Albert was notoriously fond of luncheon, and Queen Victoria humoured him. They dined late, and the Luncheon at the Palace became a very real and fully recognized meal. At it the Queen sometimes received her friends, as witness the Royal Journal—"Mamma came to luncheon with her lady and gentleman." It could not have been pleasant for the "lady and gentleman," but it established the practice.

"Sunday luncheon" was always a thing apart. For some reason not altogether clear, but either because devotion long sustained makes a strong demand on the nervous system or because a digestive nap was the best way of employing

Sunday afternoon, men who ate no luncheon on week-days devoured Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pudding on Sundays and had their appropriate reward. Bishop Wilberforce, whose frank self-communings are always such delightful reading, wrote in his diary for Sunday, October 27, 1861: "Preached in York Minster. Very large congregation. Back to Bishopthorpe. Sleepy, *ehou*, at afternoon service; *must* eat no luncheon on Sunday." When Luncheon had once firmly established itself, not merely as a meal but as an institution, Sunday luncheons in London became recognized centres of social life. Where there was even a moderate degree of intimacy a guest might drop in and be sure of mayonnaise, chicken, and welcome. I well remember an occasion of this kind when I saw social Presence of Mind exemplified, as I thought and think, on an heroic scale. Luncheon was over. It had not been a particularly bounteous meal; the guests had been many; the chicken had been eaten to the drumstick and the cutlets to the bone. Nothing remained but a huge Trifle, of chromatic and threatening aspect, on which no one had ventured to embark. Coffee was just coming, when the servant entered with an anxious expression, and murmured to the hostess that Monsieur Petitpois—a newly arrived French attaché—had come and seemed to expect luncheon. The hostess grasped the situation in an instant, and issued



her commands with a promptitude and a directness which the Duke of Wellington could not have surpassed. "Clear everything away, but leave the Trifle. Then show M. Petitpois in." Enter Petitpois. "Delighted to see you. Quite right. Always at home at Sunday luncheon. Pray come and sit here and have some Trifle. It is our national Sunday dish." Poor young Petitpois, actuated by the same principle which made the Prodigal desire the husks, filled himself with sponge-cake, jam, and whipped cream; and went away looking rather pale. If he kept a journal, he no doubt noted the English Sunday as one of our most curious institutions, and the Trifle as its crowning horror.

Cardinal Manning, as all the world knows, never dined. "I never eat and I never drink," said the Cardinal. "I am sorry to say I cannot. I like dinner society very much. You see the world, and you hear things which you do not hear otherwise." Certainly that Cardinal was a fictitious personage, but he was drawn with fidelity from Cardinal Manning, who ate a very comfortable dinner at two o'clock, called it luncheon, and maintained his principle. There have always been some houses where the luncheons were much more famous than the dinners. Dinner, after all, is something of a ceremony: it requires forethought, care, and organization. Luncheon is more of a scramble, and, in the case of a numerous

and scattered family, it is the pleasantest of reunions. "When all the daughters are married nobody eats luncheon," said Lothair to his solicitor, Mr. Putney Giles : but Mr. Putney Giles, "who always affected to know everything, and generally did," replied that, even though the daughters were married, "the famous luncheons at Crecy House would always go on and be a popular mode of their all meeting." When Lord Beaconsfield wrote that passage he was thinking of Chesterfield House, May Fair, some twenty years before Lord Burton bought it. Mr. Gladstone, who thought modern luxury rather disgusting, used to complain that nowadays life in a country house meant three dinners a day, and if you reckoned sandwiches and poached eggs at five o'clock tea, nearly four. Indeed, the only difference that I can perceive between a modern luncheon and a modern dinner is that at the former meal you don't have soup or a printed *menu*. But at a luncheon at the Mansion House you have both ; so it is well for Lord Mayors that their reigns are brief.

One touch of personal reminiscence may close this study. While yet the Old Bailey stood erect and firm, as grim in aspect as in association, I used often, through the courtesy of a civic official, to share the luncheon of the judge and the aldermen, eaten during an interval in the trial, in a gloomy chamber behind the Bench. I still see,

in my mind's eye, a learned judge, long since gone to his account, stuffing cold beef and pigeon pie, and quaffing London stout, black as Erebus and heavy as lead. After this repast he went back into Court (where he never allowed a window to be opened) and administered what he called justice through the long and lethargic afternoon. No one who had witnessed the performance could doubt the necessity for a Court of Criminal Appeal.

## XXIV

### TEA

FEW, I fear, are the readers of Mrs. Sherwood. Yet in "The Fairchild Family" she gave us some pictures of English country life at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century which neither Jane Austen nor Mrs. Gaskell ever beat, and at least one scene of horror which is still unsurpassed. I cannot say as much for "Henry Milner, or the Story of a Little Boy who was not brought up according to the Fashions of this World." No, indeed—very far from it. And Henry now recurs to my mind only because, in narrating his history, Mrs. Sherwood archly introduces a sentence which may serve as a motto for this meditation. Like Bismarck (though unlike him in other respects), she was fond of parading scraps of a rather bald Latinity; and, in this particular instance, she combines simple scholarship with staid humour, making her hero exclaim to a tea-making lady, "Non possum vivere sine Te." The play on *Te* and *Tea* will be remarked as very ingenious. Barring the Latinity and the jest, I am at one with Mrs. Sherwood in the sentiment, "My heart leaps up when I be-

hold" a teapot, like Wordsworth's when he beheld a rainbow; and the mere mention of tea in literature stirs in me thoughts which lie too deep for words. Thus I look forward with the keenest interest to

## THE BOOK OF TEA

BY OKAKURA-KAKUZO

which the publishers promise at an early date. Solemn indeed, as befits the subject, is the preliminary announcement:—

"This book in praise of tea, written by a Japanese, will surely find sympathetic readers in England, where the custom of tea-drinking has become so important a part of the national daily life. Mr. Kakuzo shows that the English are still behind the Japanese in their devotion to tea. In England afternoon tea is variously regarded as a fashionable and luxurious aid to conversation, a convenient way of passing the time, or a restful and refreshing pause in the day's occupation, but in Japan tea-drinking is ennobled into Teatism, and the English cup of tea seems trivial by comparison."

This is the right view of Tea. The wrong view was lately forced into sad prominence in the Coroner's Court:—

### DANGERS OF TEA-DRINKING

"In summing up at a Hackney inquest on Saturday, Dr. Wynn Westcott, the coroner, com-

mented on the fact that deceased, a woman of twenty-nine, had died suddenly after a meal of steak, tomatoes, and tea. One of the most injudicious habits, he said, was to drink tea with a meat meal. Tea checked the flow of the gastric juice which was necessary to digestion. He was sorry if that went against teetotal doctrines, but if people must be teetotalers they had best drink water and not tea with their meals."

My present purpose is to enquire whether the right or the wrong view has more largely predominated in English history and literature. If, after the manner of a German commentator, I were to indulge in "prolegomena" about the history, statistics, and chemical analysis of Tea, I should soon overflow my limits; and I regard a painfully well-known couplet in which "tea" rhymes with "obey" as belonging to that class of quotations which no self-respecting writer can again resuscitate. Perhaps a shade, though only a shade, less hackneyed is Cowper's tribute to the divine herb:—

"Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,  
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,  
And, while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn  
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,  
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,  
So let us welcome peaceful evening in."

But this really leaves the problem unsolved. Cowper drank tea, and drank it in the evening;

but whether he "had anything with it," as the phrase is, remains uncertain. Bread and butter, I think, he must have had, or toast, or what Thackeray scoffs at as the "blameless muffin"; but I doubt about eggs, and feel quite sure that he did not mingle meat and tea. So much for 1795, and I fancy that the practice of 1816 (when "Emma" was published) was not very different. When Mrs. Bates went to spend the evening with Mr. Woodhouse there was "vast deal of chat, and backgammon, and tea was made downstairs"; but, though the passage is a little obscure, I am convinced that the "biscuits and baked apples" were not served with the tea, but came in later with the ill-fated "fricassee of sweetbread and asparagus." Lord Beaconsfield, who was born in 1804, thus describes the evening meal at "Hurstley"—a place drawn in detail from his early home in Buckinghamshire: "Then they were summoned to tea. . . . The curtains were drawn and the room lighted; an urn hissed; there were piles of bread and butter, and a pyramid of buttered toast." And, when the family from the Hall went to tea at the Rectory, they found "the tea-equipage a picture of abundance and refinement. Such pretty china, and such various and delicious cakes! White bread, and brown bread, and plum cakes, and seed cakes, and no end of cracknels, and toasts, dry or buttered." Still here is no mention of animal

foods, and even Dr. Wynn Westcott would have found nothing to condemn. The same refined tradition meets us in "Cranford," which, as we all know from its reference to "Pickwick," describes the social customs of 1836-7. Mrs. Jameson was the Queen of Society in Cranford, and, when she gave a tea-party, the herb was reinforced only by "very thin bread and butter," and Miss Barker was thought rather vulgar—"a tremendous word in Cranford"—because she gave seed cake as well. Even in "Pickwick" itself, though that immortal book does not pretend to depict the manners of polite society, the tea served in the sanctum of the "Marquis of Granby" at Dorking was flanked by nothing more substantial than a plate of hot buttered toast.

Impressive, therefore, almost startling, is the abrupt transition from these ill-supported teas (which, according to Dr. Wynn Westcott, were hygienically sound) to the feast, defiant of all gastronomic law, which Mrs. Snagsby spread for Mr. and Mrs. Chadband—"Dainty new bread, crusty twists, cool fresh butter, thin slices of ham, tongue, and German sausage, delicate little rows of anchovies nestling in parsley, new-laid eggs brought up warm in a napkin, and hot buttered toast." German sausage washed down with tea! What, oh what, would the Coroner say? And what must be the emotions of the waiters at the House of Commons, with their traditions of Bellamy's



veal pies and Mr. Disraeli's port, when they see the Labour Members sit down to a refection of Tea and Brawn? But, it may be urged, Medical Science is always shifting its ground, and what is the elixir of life to-day may be labelled Poison to-morrow. Thus Thackeray, using his keenest art to stigmatize the unwholesome greediness of a City Dinner, describes the surfeited guests adjourning after dinner to the Tea Room, and there "drinking slops and eating buttered muffins until the grease trickled down their faces." This was written in 1847; but in 1823 the great Dr. Kitchener, both physician and gastronomer, pronounces thus—"Tea after Dinner assists Digestion, quenches Thirst, and thereby exhilarates the Spirits," and he suggests as an acceptable alternative "a little warmed Milk, with a teaspoonful of Rum, a bit of Sugar, and a little Nutmeg." Truly our forefathers must have had remarkable digestions.

"These be black Vespers' pageants." I have spoken so far of Tea in the evening. When did people begin to drink Tea in the morning? I seem to remember that, in our earlier romancists and dramatists, Coffee is the beverage for breakfast. Certainly it is so—and inimitably described as well—in Lord Beaconsfield's account of a Yorkshire breakfast in "Sybil." At Holland House, which was the very ark and sanctuary of luxury, Macaulay in 1831 breakfasted on "very

good coffee and very good tea, and very good eggs, butter kept in the midst of ice, and hot rolls." Here the two liquids are proffered, but meat is rigidly excluded, and Dr. Wynn Westcott's law of life observed. But nine years later the character of breakfast had altered, and altered in an unwholesome direction. The increasing practice of going to Scotland for the shooting season had familiarized Englishmen with the more substantial fare of the Scotch breakfast, and since that time the unhallowed combination of meat and tea has been the law of our English breakfast-table. Sir Thomas in the "Ingoldsby Legends," on the morning of his mysterious disappearance, had eaten for breakfast some bacon, an egg, a little broiled haddock, and a slice of cold beef.

"And then—let me see!—he had two, perhaps three, Cups (with sugar and cream) of strong gunpowder tea, With a spoonful in each of some choice *eau de vie*, Which with nine out of ten would perhaps disagree."

The same trait may be remembered in the case of Mrs. Finching, who, though she had cold fowl and broiled ham for breakfast, "measured out a spoonful or two of some brown liquid that smelt like brandy and put it into her tea, saying that she was obliged to be careful to follow the directions of her medical man, though the flavour was anything but agreeable."

Time passes, and the subject expands. We

have spoken of Tea in the morning and Tea in the evening. To these must be added, if the topic were to be treated with scientific completeness, that early cup which opens our eyes, as each new day dawns, on this world of opportunity and wonder, and that last dread draught with which the iron nerves of Mr. Gladstone were composed to sleep after a late night in the House of Commons. But I have no space for these divagations, and must crown this imperfect study of Tea with the true, though surprising, statement that I myself—*moi qui vous parle*—have known the inventor of Five o’Clock Tea. This was Anna Maria Stanhope, daughter of the third Earl of Harrington and wife of the seventh Duke of Bedford. She died at an advanced age—rouged and curled and trim to the last—in 1857; but not before her life’s work was accomplished and Five o’Clock Tea established among the permanent institutions of our free and happy country. Surely she is worthier of a place in the Positivist Kalendar of those who have benefited Humanity than Hippocrates, Harvey, or Arkwright; and yet Sir Algernon West writes thus in his book of “Recollections”: “Late in the ’forties and in the ’fifties, Five o’Clock Teas were just coming into vogue, the old Duchess of Bedford’s being, as I considered, very dreary festivities.” Such is gratitude, and such is fame.

## XXV

### SUPPER

“S is the Supper, where all went in pairs ;  
T is the Twaddle they talked on the stairs.”

THOUGH the merry muse of dear “C. S. C.” may thus serve to introduce our subject, the repast which he has in view is only a very special and peculiar—one had almost said an unnatural—form of Supper. The Ball Supper, eaten anywhere between 12 o’clock and 2 A.M., is clearly a thing apart from the Supper which, in days of Early Dinner, made England great. Yet the Ball Supper had its charms, and they have been celebrated both in prose and in verse. Byron knew all about them :—

“I’ve seen some balls and revels in my time,  
And stay’d them over for some silly reason.”

One of those reasons was the prospect of supping with Bessie Rawdon,<sup>1</sup> the only girl he ever saw

“Whose bloom could after dancing dare the dawn.”

In her society a fresh zest was added to “the

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Lady William Russell.

lobster salad, and champagne, and chat" which the poet loved so well.

Fifty years had passed, and a Ball Supper was (and for all I know may still be) much the same. "The bright moments flew on. Suddenly there was a mysterious silence in the hall, followed by a kind of suppressed stir. Every one seemed to be speaking with bated breath, or, if moving, walking on tiptoe. It was the supper-hour—

'Soft hour which wakes the wish and melts the heart.'

'What a perfect family!' exclaimed Hugo Bohun as he extracted a couple of fat little birds from their bed of aspic jelly. 'Everything they do in such perfect taste! How safe you were here to have ortolans for supper!'" But, after all, Ball Suppers are frivolities, and College Suppers scarcely more serious; although a modern bard has endeavoured to give them a classical sanction by making young Horace at the University of Athens thus address himself to his new acquaintance Balbus:—

"A friend has sent me half-a-dozen brace  
Of thrush and blackbird from a moor in Thrace.  
These we will have for supper, with a dish  
Of lobster-patties and a cuttle-fish."

And we may be sure that a meal where Horace was host was not unaccompanied by wine and song.

But the Supper which I have in mind is the

substantial meal which, during the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth, formed the nightly complement to the comparatively early dinner. "High Tea" such as Dickens loved and described—"Bagman's Tea," as I was taught to call it,—became popular as tea became cheaper. You dined, say, at one, and drank tea (and ate accompaniments) at seven. But Supper, eaten at nine or ten o'clock, was a more substantial affair, and the poison of Tea, so much deprecated by our modern Coroners, was never suffered to pollute it. In the account of a supper in 1770 I have read this exhilarating item: "A turtle was sent as a Present to the Company and dress'd in a very high *Gout*, after the West Indian manner;" and such a dish, eaten at bedtime, of course required vinous assistance. A forefather of my own noted in his diary for 1788, "The man who superintends Mrs. Cazalan's of New Cavendish Street suppers has a salary of £100 a year for his trouble;" and one may rest assured that Mrs. Cazalan's guests drank something more exhilarating than tea at her famous supper-table. "Guy Mannering" depicts the habits of Scotch Society at the close of the eighteenth century; and Counsellor Pleydell, coming hungry from a journey, suggests that a brace of wild ducks should be added to the "light family supper." These he ate "without prejudice to a subsequent tart," and with these viands he drank

ale and Burgundy, moralizing thus: "I love the *Coena*, the supper of the ancients, the pleasant meal and social glass that washes out of one's mind the cobwebs that business or gloom have been spinning in our brains all day." On the point of precedent, the Counsellor, or rather Sir Walter Scott, is at issue with Lord John Russell, who said, in protesting against dinner at eight o'clock: "Some learned persons, indeed, endeavour to support this practice by precedent, and quote the Roman Supper; but those suppers were at three o'clock in the afternoon, and ought to be a subject of contempt instead of imitation in Grosvenor Square." Supper at three in the afternoon! I must leave this startling statement to the investigations of Dryasdust. At the same period as that at which the Whig Essayist, not yet statesman, was protesting against late dinners, Sydney Smith was bewailing the effects of supper on the mind and temper:—

"My friend sups late; he eats some strong soup, then a lobster, then some tart, and he dilutes these esculent varieties with wine. The next day I call upon him. He is going to sell his house in London and retire into the country. He is alarmed for his eldest daughter's health. His expenses are hourly increasing, and nothing but a timely retreat can save him from ruin. All this is lobster; and, when over-excited nature has had time to manage this testaceous incumbrance, the

daughter recovers, the finances are in good order, and every rural idea is effectually excluded from the mind."

I take due note of the word *wine*, but I believe it was usually mixed with water. Of Mr. Pitt, not a model of abstemiousness, it is recorded that he drank "a good deal of port wine and water at supper"; and Mr. Woodhouse, whom his worst enemy never accused of excess, recommended Mrs. Goddard to have "*half* a glass of wine, a *small* half-glass, in a tumbler of water," as an accompaniment to the minced chicken and scalloped oysters. Dr. Kitchener, who was a practising physician as well as a writer on Gastronomy, recommended for Supper "a Biscuit, or a Sandwich, or a bit of Cold Fowl, and a Glass of Beer, or Wine, and Toast and Water"; or for "such as dine very late, Gruel or a little Bread and Cheese, or Powdered Cheese, and a glass of Beer." They vaunt that medicine is a progressive science, but where is the practitioner to-day who would venture on these heroic prescriptions of 1825?

I am accused of quoting too often from Lord Beaconsfield; and, though I demur to the word "too," I admit that I quote from him very often, because no writer whom I know scanned so carefully and noted so exactly the social phenomena of the time in which he lived. Here is his description of Supper in the year 1835:—

"When there were cards there was always a



little supper—a lobster, and a roasted potato, and that sort of easy thing, with curious drinks ; and, on fitting occasions, a bottle of champagne appeared.”

The Suppers cooked by the illustrious Ude at Crockford's Gaming House (now the Devonshire Club) were famous for their luxurious splendour ; and, being free to all comers, were used as baits to inveigle ingenuous Youth into the Gambling-room ; for you could scarcely eat a man's supper night after night and never give him his chance of revenge. But Suppers to be eaten amid the frantic excitements of a Gaming House were, of necessity, rather stimulating than substantial. For substantial Suppers we must turn to the life of a class rather less exalted than that which lost its fortune at “Crocky's. Dickens's Suppers, which may be taken to represent the supping habits of the Middle Class in 1837, are substantial enough, but rather unappetizing. Old Mr. Wardle, though the most hospitable of men, only gave Mr. Pickwick “a plentiful portion of a gigantic round of cold beef”—which most people would think an indigestible supper. Mrs. Bardell's system was even more culpable, according to Dr. Wynn Westcott, for she gave her friends a little warm supper of “Petitoes and Toasted Cheese,” with “a quiet cup of tea.” I do not exactly know what petitoes are, but I am sure that when stewed in tea they must be poisonous. When Mr. and Mrs.

Kenwigs, in honour of their wedding-day, made a supper for their uncle, the Collector, they arranged the feast more hygienically, for their "pair of boiled fowls, large piece of pork, apple-pie, potatoes, and greens" were reinforced by a bowl of punch; and there is a quite delicious supper in the "Old Curiosity Shop," where a stew, worthy to rank with that which Meg Merrilies forced on the reluctant Dominie, is washed down with a pint of mulled ale.

Thackeray, though he excelled at a Dinner, knew also, at least in his earlier and Bohemian days, what was meant by a Supper. Mr. Archer, the journalist in "Pendennis," who was so fond of vaunting his imaginary acquaintance with great people, thus described his evening repast at Apsley House:—

"The Duke knows what I like, and says to the Groom of the Chambers: 'Martin, you will have some cold beef, not too much done, and a pint bottle of Pale Ale, and some brown Sherry ready in my study as usual.' The Duke doesn't eat supper himself, but he likes to see a man enjoy a hearty meal, and he knows that I dine early."

But all this is fifty years ago and more. Do people eat supper nowadays? Of course the young and frivolous eat ball-suppers, and supper after the Theatre is a recognized feature of London life. But does any one eat supper in his own house? To be sure, a tray of wine and

water still appears in some houses just as the party is breaking up, and it is called a "Supper Tray," but is only the thin and pallid ghost of what was once a jolly meal.

One more form of Supper remains to be recorded. In the circles in which I was reared it was customary to observe one day in the year as a kind of Festival of the Church Missionary Society or the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, according as the principles of the Incumbent were Low or High. The arrangements comprised a special service in church, with a sermon by that mysterious stranger "the Deputation from the Parent Society"; an evening meeting in the Town Hall; and a supper at the Rectory or the Squire's house. Bidden to such a festival, a friend of the Missionary cause wrote thus to the lady who had invited him: "I greatly regret that I cannot attend the service, and I very much fear that I shall not be in time for the meeting. But, D.V., I will be with you at Supper."

## XXVI

### INNS AND HOTELS

"ANCHOVIES and Sack after Supper" was honest Falstaff's notion of an apt sequence. But Anchovies, even in their modern extension of "Hors d'Œuvres," will not make a chapter; and Sack, in the form of Sherry, has been exhaustively discussed. I must therefore betake myself from Falstaff to Touchstone, whose enumeration of "Dinners and Suppers and Sleeping-hours" may serve my present need.

Where to dine? Where to sup? Where to sleep? Momentous questions these; and at this instant they are in the thoughts and on the lips of thousands of my fellow-creatures as they journey through or towards London. October in London is a season with marked and special characteristics. Restaurants are crowded; Bond Street is blocked by shopping ladies; seats at the theatre must be booked ten days in advance.

This October "Season" is the product of many forces. The genuine Londoners, who have been away, for health or sport or travel, in August and

September now come back with a rush, and hasten to make up for their long exile by feverish activity in the pursuit of pleasure. But the Londoners by no means have the town to themselves. The Country Cousins are present in great force. They live laborious but delightful days in examining the winter fashions; they get all their meals at Prince's or the Carlton; and they go to the play every night. To these must be added the Americans, who, having shot our grouse and stalked our deer and drunk of our medicated springs, are now passing through London on their way to Liverpool. As a rule, they buy their clothes in Paris, and leave the products of Bond Street and Grafton Street to the British consumer. But their propensity to Theatre-parties and Suppers endears them to managers and restaurant-keepers; and on Sunday they can be detected at St. Paul's or the Abbey, rendering the hymns with that peculiar intonation for which Chaucer's "Prioress" was so justly admired. Even a few belated French and German tourists are still wandering disconsolately among "the sheddings of the pining umbrage" in the parks, or gazing with awe at the grim front of Buckingham Palace. Where do all these pilgrims stay? We know where they dine and sup; but where do they spend what Touchstone called their "sleeping-hours"? I only know that they do not spend them in Inns, for Inns as I understand the word

have ceased to exist. They went out with "The Road."

It has been remarked by not unfriendly critics that the author of these quiet meditations seems to live a good deal in the past, and people in whom the chronological sense is missing are apt to think me a great deal older than I am. Thus when I have recalled among my earliest recollections the fire which destroyed Covent Garden Theatre (in 1856), I have been thought to be babbling of Drury Lane, which was burnt down in 1812; and so, when I say that in early life I travelled a great deal upon the Road, I shall probably be accused of having been born before railways were invented. What is true enough is that a prejudice against railways lingered long after they were in general use; some people thought them dangerous, some undignified, and I believe that there were some who even thought them wicked because they are not mentioned in the Bible. "I suppose you have heard of Lady Vanilla's trip from Birmingham?" says Lady Marney in "Sybil." "Have you not, indeed? She came up with Lady Laura, and two of the most gentlemanlike men sitting opposite her; never met, she says, two more intelligent men. She begged one of them at Wolverhampton to change seats with her, and he was most politely willing to comply with her wishes, only it was

necessary that his companion should move at the same time, for they were chained together—two gentlemen sent to town for picking pockets at Shrewsbury races.” “A Countess and a felon!” said Lord Mowbray. “So much for public conveyances.” To these social perils were added terrors of tunnels, terrors of viaducts, terrors of fires which would burn you to an ash in your locked carriage, terrors of robbers who were supposed to travel first-class for the express purpose of chloroforming well-dressed passengers and then stealing their watches. Haunted by these and similar fears, some old-fashioned people travelled by road till well into the 'sixties. From my home in the South Midlands we took a whole day in getting to London, forty miles off; two to Leamington, three to Winchester; and those who still travelled in this leisurely mode were the last patrons of the Inn.

It was generally a broad-browed, solid, comfortable-looking house in the most central part of a country town. Not seldom the sign was taken from the armorial bearings of the local magnate. There were a Landlord and a Landlady, who came out bowing when the carriage drove up, and conducted the travellers to their rooms, while the “Imperials” were taken down from the roof of the carriage. (Could one buy an “Imperial” nowadays if one wanted it? The most recent

reference to it which I can recall occurs in the first chapter of "Tom Brown's School Days.") Very often the rooms of the Inn were distinguished not by numbers, but by names or tokens derived from the situation, or the furniture, or from some famous traveller who had slept in them—the Bow Room, the Peacock Room, or the Wellington Room. The Landlord had generally been a butler, but sometimes a coachman. Anyhow, he and his wife had "lived in the best families" and "knew how things ought to be done." The furniture was solid, dark, and handsome—mahogany predominating, here and there relieved with rosewood. There was old silver on the table, and the walls were covered with sporting or coaching prints, views of neighbouring castles, and portraits of the Nobility whom the Landlord had served. The bedrooms were dark and stuffy beyond belief, with bedsteads like classic temples and deep feather-beds into which you sank as into a quicksand. The food was like the furniture, heavy and handsome. There was "gunpowder tea"—green if you asked for it,—luscious cream, and really new-laid eggs. The best bottle of claret which I ever encountered emerged, quite accidentally, from the cellar of a village Inn close to the confluence of the Greta and the Tees, in a district hallowed by the associations of Rokeby and Mr. Squeers. When, next morning, you had paid your bill—



not, as a rule, a light one—the Landlord and Lady escorted you to the door, and politely expressed a hope that you would honour them on your return journey. Then “Hey, for the lilt of the London road!” and the Montfort Arms, or the Roebuck, or the Marquis of Granby, is only a pleasant memory of an unreturning day.

What in the country was called an Inn was called in London a “Family Hotel.” It was commonly found in Dover Street, or Albemarle Street, or Bolton Street, or some such byway of Piccadilly; and in its aspect, character, and general arrangement it was exactly like the country Inn, only of necessity darker, dingier, and more airless. Respectability, mahogany, and horsehair held it in their iron grip. Here county families, coming up from the Drawing Room, or the Academy, or the Exhibition, or the Derby, spent cheerful weeks in summer. Here in the autumn they halted on their return from Doncaster or Aix. Here the boys slept on their way back to Eton or Cambridge; hither the subaltern returned, like a homing pigeon, from India or the Cape.

But the Family Hotel, like the Country Inn, has seen its day. When the *Times* was inciting the inhabitants of Rome to modernize their city, Matthew Arnold, writing in Miss Story’s album, made airy fun of the suggestion. He represented

“the *Times*, that bright Apollo,” proclaiming salvation to the “armless Cupid” imprisoned in the Vatican :—

“ ‘And what,’ cries Cupid, ‘will save us?’  
Says Apollo: ‘*Modernize Rome!*  
What inns! Your streets too, how narrow!  
Too much of palace and dome!

“ ‘O learn of London, whose paupers  
Are not pushed out by the swells!  
Wide streets, with fine double trottoirs;  
And then—the London hotels!’ ”

Between the “Inns” of my youth and these “Hotels” of to-day the difference is so great that they can scarcely be recognized as belonging to the same family. Under the old dispensation all was solid comfort, ponderous respectability, and the staid courtesy of the antique world; under the new it is all glare and glitter, show and sham; the morals of the Tuileries and the manners of Greenwich Fair. The building is something between a palace and a barrack, with a hall of marble, a staircase of alabaster, a winter garden full of birds and fountains, and a band which deafens you while you eat your refined but exiguous dinner. Among these sumptuosities the visitor is no longer a person but a number. As a number he is received by the gigantic “Suisse” who, resplendent in green and gold, watches the approach to the palace; as a number he is

registered by a dictatorial "Secretary," enshrined in a Bureau ; as a number he is shot up, like a parcel, to his airy lodgings on the seventh floor ; as a number he orders his meals ; as a number he pays his bill. The whole business is a microcosm of State Socialism : Bureaucracy is supreme, and the Individual is lost in the Machine. But, though the courtesies and the humanities and even the decencies of the old order have vanished so completely, the exactions remain much the same as they were. There is, indeed, no courtly landlord to bow, like a plumper Sir Charles Grandison, over the silver salver on which you have laid your gold ; but there are gilt-edged porters, and moustached lift-men, and a regiment of buttony boys who float round the departing guest with well-timed assiduity ; and the Suisse at the door, as he eyes our modest luggage with contemptuous glare, looks quite prepared, if need be, to extort his guerdon by physical force.

The British Inn, whatever were its shortcomings in practice, has been glorified in some of the best verse and best prose in the English language. It will, methinks, be a long time before even the most impressionable genius of the "Bodley Head" pens a panegyric of the London Hotel.

## XXVII

### TRAVEL

THE October Season, of which I lately spoke, is practically over. "The misty autumn sunlight and the sweeping autumn wind" are yielding place to cloud and storm. In a week's time London will have assumed its winter habit, and already people are settling down to their winter way of living. The last foreigner has fled. The Country Cousins have finished their shopping and have returned to the pursuit of the Pheasant and the Fox. The true Londoners—the people who come back to town for the "first note of the Muffin-bell and retreat to the country for the first note of the Nightingale"—have resumed the placidity of their normal life. Dinner-parties have hardly begun, but there are plenty of little luncheons; the curtains are drawn about four, and there are three good hours for Bridge before one need think of going to dress for dinner. And now, just when London is beginning to wear once again its most attractive aspect, at once sociable and calm, some perverse people, disturbers of the

public peace, must needs throw everything into confusion by going abroad.

Their motives are many and various. With some it is health: "I feel that I *must* have a little sunshine, I have been so rheumatic all this autumn," or "My doctor tells me that, with my tendency to bronchitis, the fogs are really dangerous." With some it is sheer restlessness: "Well, you see, we were here *all* the summer, except just Whitsuntide and Ascot and Goodwood; so we have had about enough of London. And our home in Loamshire is so fearfully lonely in winter that it quite gets on my nerves. So I think a little run will do us all good; and we shall be back by the New Year, or February at latest." With some, again, economy is the motive power; "What with two sons to allowance, and two still at school; and one girl to be married at Easter, and one just coming out, as well as a most expensive governess for the young ones, I assure you it is quite difficult to make two ends meet. We have got an excellent offer for Eaton Place from November to May, and some friends on the Riviera have repeatedly asked us to pay them a long visit; and, when that's done, one can live *en pension* at Montreux for next to nothing." Others are lured abroad by the love of gambling, though this is not avowed: "I do so love Monte Carlo—not the gambling, but the air, and, even if one does lose a franc or two at the tables, I always say

that we should lose much more at home, with Christmas presents, and Workhouse Treats, and all those tiresome things one has to do."

It is not a joke—for I never joke about religion—it is a literal fact that in my youth the prophecy in the Book of Daniel that "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" was interpreted as pointing to an enlargement of the human mind through increased facilities of travel. I do not guarantee the exegesis, but I note the fact. A hundred years ago, if parents wished to enlarge their son's understanding by sending him on the "Grand Tour" of Europe, they set aside twelve months for the fulfilment of their purpose. Young Hopeful set out in a travelling-carriage with a tutor (or Bear-Leader), a Doctor, and a Valet. The Bear-Leader's was a recognized and lucrative profession. In a diary for 1788, which lies before me as I write, I read: "Mr. Coxe, the traveller, has been particularly lucky as a Pupil-Leader about Europe. After Lord Herbert, he had Mr. Whitbred at £800 per ann., and now has Mr. Portman, with £1000 per ann." Patrick Brydone, scholar, antiquary, and *virtuoso*, whose daughter married the second Earl of Minto, was "Pupil-Leader" (or Bear-Leader) to William Beckford. Sydney Smith was dug out of his curacy on Salisbury Plain in order to act as Bear-Leader to the grandfather of the present Lord St. Aldwyn. Charles Richard Sumner, who, as last of the

Prince-Bishops of Winchester, drew £40,000 a year for forty years, began life as Bear-Leader to Lord Mount-Charles, eldest son of that Lady Conyngham whom George IV. admired ; and he owed his first preferment in the Church to the amiable complaisance with which he rescued his young charge from a matrimonial entanglement. That was early in the nineteenth century ; but forty years later the Bear-Leader was still an indispensable adjunct to the Grand Tour of Illustrious Youth. The late Duke of Argyll has told us how he made his travels sandwiched inside his father's chariot between his preceptor and his physician. When the Marquis of Montacute made his pilgrimage to the Holy Land he was even more liberally attended ; for, in addition to his Bear-Leader, Colonel Grouse, he took his father's doctor, Mr Groby, to avert or cure the fevers, and his father's chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Bernard, to guide his researches into the theology of Syria. Perhaps Lord Montacute existed only in Lord Beaconsfield's rich imagination ; but Thackeray, who never invented but always described what he saw, drew a delightful portrait of "the Rev. Baring Leader," who, "having a great natural turn and liking towards the aristocracy," consented to escort Viscount Talboys when that beer-loving young nobleman made his celebrated journey down the Rhine.

But, though a special divinity always hedged,

as it still hedges, the travels of an Eldest Son, the more modest journeyings of his parents were not accomplished without considerable form and fuss. Lord and Lady Proud flesh or Mr. and Mrs. Goldmore travelled all over Europe in their own carriage. It was planted bodily on the deck of the steamer, so that its privileged occupants could endure the torments of the crossing in dignified seclusion ; and, when once the solid shore of the Continent was safely reached, it was drawn by an endless succession of post-horses, ridden by postillions, with the valet and maid (like those who pertained to Sir Leicester and Lady Dedlock) "affectionate in the rumble." The inside of the carriage was a miracle of ingenuity. Space was economized with the most careful art, and all the appliances of travel—looking-glasses and luncheon-baskets, lamps and maps, newspapers and books—were bestowed in their peculiar and appropriate corners. I possess a "dining equipage" which made the tour of Europe not once but often in the service of a Diplomatist. It is shaped something like a large egg, and covered with shagreen. It contains a tumbler, a sandwich-box, and a silver-handled knife, fork, and spoon ; the handle of each of these tools unscrews, and in their hollow interiors the Diplomatist carried his salt, sugar, and pepper. On the roof of the carriage was the more substantial luggage. A travelling-bath, though not unknown, was rather an ex-



ceptional luxury, and, according to our modern notions, it was painfully small. A silver tub which sufficed for the ablutions of the great Duke of Marlborough through the campaigns which changed the face of Europe now serves as a rose-bowl at the banquets of Spencer House.

The trunks, which were strapped to the roof of the travelling-carriage, were of a peculiar form—very shallow, and so shaped as to fit into one another and occupy every inch of space. These were called Imperials, and just now I referred to Tom Hughes's undeserved strictures on them. The passage fits neatly into our present subject: "I love vagabonds, only I prefer poor to rich ones. Couriers and ladies' maids, imperials and travelling-carriages, are an abomination unto me—I cannot away with them." To me, on the contrary, the very word "Imperial" (when divested of political associations) is pleasant. It appeals to the historic sense. It carries us back to Napoleon's campaigns, and to that wonderful house on wheels—his travelling-carriage—now enshrined at Madame Tussaud's. It even titillates the gastronomic instinct by recalling that masterly method of cooking a fowl which bears the name of Marengo. The great Napoleon had no notion of fighting his battles on an empty stomach, so, wherever he was, a portable kitchen, in the shape of a travelling-carriage, was close at hand. The cook and his *marmitons* travelled inside, with the appliances

for making a charcoal fire at a moment's notice, while the Imperials on the roof contained the due supply of chickens, eggs, bread, and Bordeaux. In the preparation of a meal under such conditions time was money—nay, rather, it was Empire. The highest honours were bestowed on the most expeditious method, and the method called after Marengo took exactly twenty minutes.

Here is testimony much more recent. Lady Dorothy Nevill, in the volume of "Reminiscences" which she has lately given to the world, thus describes her youthful journeys between her London and her Norfolk homes: "It took us two long days to get to Wolterton, and the cost must have been considerable. We went in the family coach with four post-horses, whilst two 'fourgons' conveyed the luggage." But travelling abroad was a still more majestic ceremonial: "We were a large party—six of ourselves, as well as two maids, a footman, and French cook; nor must I forget a wonderful courier, covered with gold and braid. He preceded our cavalcade and announced the imminent arrival of a great English Milord and his suite. We had two fourgons to hold the *batterie de cuisine* and our six beds, which had to be unpacked and made up every night. We had, besides the family coach and a barouche, six saddle horses, and two attendant grooms."

Travel in those brave days of old was a dignified,

a leisurely, and a comfortable process. How different is Travel in these degenerate times! For the young man rejoicing in his strength it means, as Tom Hughes said forty years ago, "getting over a couple of thousand miles for three-pound-ten; going round Ireland, with a return ticket, in a fortnight; dropping your copy of Tennyson on the top of a Swiss mountain, or pulling down the Danube in an Oxford racing-boat." For those who have reached maturer years it may mean a couple of nights in Paris, just to see the first performance of a new play and to test the merits of the latest restaurant, or it may mean a week in New York to study the bearings of the Presidential election and to gather fresh views of the Silver Question. Dr. Lunn kindly invites the more seriously minded to a Conference at Grindelwald, where we can combine the delights of Alpine scenery and undenominational religion; and "the son of a well-known member of the House of Lords" offers to conduct us personally through "A Lion and Rhinoceros Hunting Party in Somaliland," or "A Scientific Expedition to Central Africa, to visit the supposed cradle of the human race and the site of the Garden of Eden." Nothing of Travelling-carriages and Imperials here! No "maid and valet affectionate in the rumble." All the pomp and circumstance, all the ease and calm, of Travel have vanished, and with them all sense of independence and

responsibility. The modern traveller is shot like a bullet through a tunnel, or hauled like a parcel up a hill. He certainly sees the world at very little cost, but he sees it under wonderfully uncomfortable conditions.

## XXVIII

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A PICTORIAL critic, commending the water-colour painting of Mr. Arthur Rich, says that, after examining his firm and serious work, "it is impossible to think that there is anything trivial in the art of Aquarelle—that it is, as has been said, 'a thing Aunts do.'"

*A thing Aunts do.* I linger on the words, for they suggest deep thoughts. Many and mysterious are the tricks of language—not least so the subtle law by which certain relationships inevitably suggest peculiar traits. Thus the Grandmother stands to all time as the type of benevolent feebleness; the Stepmother was branded by classical antiquity as Unjust; and Thackeray's Mrs. Gashleigh and Mrs. Chuff are the typical Mothers-in-Law. The Father is commonly the "Heavy Father" of fiction and the drama. The Mother is always quoted with affection, as in "Mother-wit," our Mother-country, and our Mother-tongue. "A Brother," ever since the days of Solomon, "is born for adversity," and a Brother-officer implies a loyal friend. A Sister is the type of Innocence, with

just a faint tinge or *nuance* of pitying contempt, as when the Vainglorious Briton speaks of the "Sister Country" across St. George's Channel, or the hubristic Oxonian sniggers at the "Sister University" of Cambridge. Eldest and Younger Sons again, as I have before now had occasion to point out, convey two quite different sets of ideas, and this discrepancy has not escaped the notice of the social Poet, who observes that—

"Acres and kine and tenements and sheep  
Enrich the Eldest, while the Younger Sons  
Monopolize the talents and the duns."

"My Uncle," in colloquial phrase, signifies the merchant who transacts his business under the sign of the Three Golden Balls; and to these expressive relationships must be added Auntship. "A thing Aunts do," says the pictorial critic; and the contumelious phrase is not of yesterday, for in 1829 a secularly-minded friend complained that young Mr. William Gladstone, then an Undergraduate at Christ Church, had "mixed himself up so much with the St. Mary Hall and Oriel set, who are really, for the most part, only fit to live with maiden aunts and keep tame rabbits." To paint in water-colour and to keep tame rabbits are pursuits which to the superficial gaze have little in common, though both are, or were, characteristic of Aunts, and both are, in some sense, accomplishments, demanding natural taste,

acquired skill, patience, care, a delicate touch, and a watchful eye. Perhaps these were the particular accomplishments in which the traditional Aunt "specialized," though she had never heard that bad word ; but, if she chose to diffuse her energies more widely, the world was all before her where to choose ; and, by a singular reversal of the law of progress, there were more "accomplishments" to solicit her attention a hundred years ago than there are to-day.

When the most fascinating of all heroines, Di Vernon, anticipated posterity by devoting her attention to politics, field sports, and classical literature, she enumerated, among the more feminine accomplishments which she had discarded, "sewing a tucker, working cross-stitch, and making a pudding" ; and she instanced, among the symbols of orthodox femininity "a shepherdess wrought in worsted, a broken-backed spinet, a lute with three strings, rock-work, shell-work, and needle-work." We clear the century with a flying leap, and find ourselves in the company of a model matron, with surroundings substantially unchanged : "Mrs. Bayham-Badger was surrounded in the drawing-room by various objects indicative of her painting a little, playing the piano a little, playing the guitar a little, playing the harp a little, singing a little, working a little, reading a little, writing poetry a little, and botanizing a little. If I add to the little list of her accomplishments that she rouged a little, I do not mean that there was any harm in it."

Miss Volumnia Dedlock's accomplishments, though belonging to the same period, were slightly different: "Displaying in early life a pretty talent for cutting ornaments out of coloured paper, and also singing to the guitar in the Spanish tongue and propounding French conundrums in country houses, she passed the twenty years of her existence between twenty and forty in a sufficiently agreeable manner. Lapsing then out of date, and being considered to bore mankind by her vocal performances in the Spanish language, she retired to Bath." Perhaps she had been educated by Miss Monflathers, "who was at the head of the head Boarding and Day Establishment in the town," and whose gloss on the didactic ditty of the Busy Bee so confounded the emissary from the Waxworks.

"In books, or work, or healthful play

is quite right as far as genteel children are concerned, and in their case 'work' means painting on velvet, fancy needle-work, or embroidery." Do even Aunts paint on velvet, or cut ornaments out of coloured paper, in this "so-called Twentieth Century"? I know no more pathetic passage in the Literature of Art than that in which Mrs. Gaskell enumerated Miss Matty's qualifications for the work of teaching:—

"I ran over her accomplishments. Once upon a time I had heard her say she could play 'Ah ! vous dirai-je maman?' on the piano; but that



was long, long ago ; that faint shadow of musical acquirement had died out years before. She had also once been able to trace patterns very nicely for muslin embroidery, but that was her nearest approach to the accomplishment of drawing, and I did not think it would go very far. Miss Matty's eyes were failing her, and I doubted if she could discover the number of threads in a worsted-work pattern, or rightly appreciate the different shades required for Queen Adelaide's face, in the loyal wool-work now fashionable in Cranford."

The allusion to Queen Adelaide's face fixes the narrative between 1820 and 1830, and George Eliot was depicting the same unenlightened period when she described the accomplishments provided by Ladies' Schools as "certain small tinklings and smearings." Probably all of us can recall an Aunt who tinkled on the piano, or a First Cousin once Removed who smeared on Bristol Board. Lady Dorothy Nevill, whose invincible force and ever-green memory carry down into the reign of King Edward VII. the traditions of Queen Charlotte's Court, is a singularly accomplished Aunt, and she has just made this remarkable confession: "At different times I have attempted many kinds of amateur work, including book illumination, leather-working, wood-carving, and, of late years, a kind of old-fashioned paper-work, which consists in arranging little slips of coloured paper into decorative designs, as was done at the end of the

eighteenth century. When completed, this work is made up into boxes, trays, or mounts for pictures." Surely in this accomplishment Miss Volumnia Dedlock lives again. And then Lady Dorothy, lapsing into reminiscent vein, makes this rather half-hearted apology for the domestic artistry of bygone days: "Years ago ladies used to spend much more of their time in artistic work of some kind or other, for there were not then the many distractions which exist to-day. Indeed, in the country some sort of work was a positive necessity; and though, no doubt, by far the greater portion of what was done was absolutely hideous, useless, and horrible, yet it served the purpose of passing away many an hour which otherwise would have been given up to insufferable boredom."

Yes, the fashions of the world succeed one another in perpetual change; but Boredom is eternally the enemy, and the paramount necessity of escaping from it begets each year some new and strange activity. The Aunt no longer paints in water-colours or keeps tame rabbits, flattens ferns in an album, or traces crude designs with a hot poker on a deal board. To-day she urges the impetuous bicycle, or, in more extreme cases, directs the murderous motor; lectures on politics or platonic, Icelandic art, or Kamschatkan literature. Perhaps she has a Cause or a Mission pleads for the legal enforcement of Vegetarian Boots, or tears down the knocker of a Statesman

who refuses her the suffrage. Perhaps her enthusiasms are less altruistic, and then she may pillage her friends at Bridge, or supply the *New York Sewer* with a weekly column of Classy Cuttings. "Are you the *Daily Mail*?" incautiously chirped a literary lady to an unknown friend who had rung her up on the telephone. "No, I'm not, but I always thought you were," was the reply; and so, in truth, she was.

## XXIX

### CIDER

AN ingenious correspondent of mine has lately been visiting the Brewers' Exhibition, and has come away from it full of Cider. I mean "full" in the intellectual rather than the physical sense—full of the subject, though unversed in the beverage. He reminds me that Charles Lamb had his catalogue of "Books which are no books—*biblia a-biblia*," among which he reckoned Court Calendars, Directories, Pocket-books, Draught-boards bound and lettered on the back, Scientific Treatises, Almanacs, Statutes at Large, and Paley's Moral Philosophy. My correspondent suggests that, in a like spirit, a Brewer must have his catalogue of Drinks which are no drinks—*pota a-pota*—and that among them, if only the secret thoughts of his heart were known, he must reckon Cider. Yet at the Brewers' Exhibition there was a Literature of Cider, and that innocent-sounding beverage was quoted at a price per bottle at which Claret is not ashamed to be sold. That the men of Malt and Hops should thus officially recognize the existence of fermented apple-juice strikes my friend as an Economy of Truth; a suppression, or at least an

evasion, of a deep-seated and absolute belief. They cannot really regard Cider as a drink, and yet they give it a place alongside that manly draught which has made old England what she is. I, on the other hand, who always like to regard the actions of my fellow-men in the most favourable light, prefer to think that the Brewers have been employing some portion of that enforced leisure, which the decay of their industry must have brought, in studying English literature, and that they have thus been made acquainted with the name and fame of Cider.

*Biblia a-biblia* set me thinking of Lamb, and when once one begins recalling "Elia" one drifts along, in a kind of waking reverie, from one pleasant fantasy to another. *Biblia a-biblia* led me on to "Dream Children," and Dream Children to Dream Riddles—a reverie of my own childhood, when we used to ask one another a pleasing conundrum which played prettily on *In Cider* and *Inside her*. But it made light of an illustrious name and had better be forgotten.

Few, I fear, are the readers of John Philips, but, if such there be, they will no doubt recall the only poem which, as far as I know, has ever been devoted to the praise of Apple-wine. Philips was a patriotic son of Herefordshire, and in Hereford Cathedral he lies buried under bunches of marble apples which commemorate his poetical achievement:—

"What soil the apple loves, what care is due  
To Orchats, timeliest when to press the fruits,

Thy gift, Pomona! in Miltonian verse,  
 Adventurous, I presume to sing; of verse  
 Nor skill'd nor studious; but my native soil  
 Invites me, and the theme as yet unsung."

"Orchats" is good; but how far these lines can be justly called Miltonian is a question which my readers can decide for themselves. At any rate, the poem contains more than four thousand lines exactly like them, and they had the remarkable fortune to be translated into Italian under the title of "Il Sidro." Philips was a Cavalier in all his tastes and sympathies: but even the Puritans, whom he so cordially detested, admitted the merits of Cider. Macaulay, with his characteristic love of irrelevant particularity, insists on the fact that, through all the commotions of the Great Rebellion and the Civil War, "the cream overflowed the pails of Cheshire and the apple-juice foamed in the presses of Herefordshire." Nor was it only in his purple prose that the great rhetorician glorified the juice of the apple. Many a reader who has forgotten all about John Philips will recall Macaulay's rhymes on the garrulous country squire who had a habit of detaining people by the button, and who was especially addicted to the society of Bishops:—

" His Grace Archbishop Manners-Sutton  
 Could not keep on a single button.  
 As for Right Reverend John of Chester,  
 His waistcoats open at the breasts are.  
 Our friend has filled a mighty trunk  
 With trophies torn from Bishop Monk,

And he has really tattered foully  
The vestments of good Bishop Howley.  
No buttons could I late discern on  
The garments of Archbishop Vernon,  
And never had his fingers mercy  
Upon the garb of Bishop Percy ;  
While buttons fly from Bishop Ryder  
Like corks that spring from bottled cyder."

From Macaulay and bottled Cyder (or Cider) the transition is easy to that admirable delineator of life and manners, Mrs. Sherwood ; she was pretty much a contemporary of Macaulay's, and was a native of Worcestershire, which in its Cider-bearing qualities is not far removed from Herefordshire, beloved of Philips. Few but fit is the audience to which Mrs. Sherwood still appeals ; yet they who were nurtured on "The Fairchild Family" still renew their youth as they peruse the adventures of Lucy, Emily, and little Henry : "The farmer and his wife, whose name was Freeman, were not people who lived in the fear of God, neither did they bring up their children well ; on which account Mr. Fairchild had often forbidden Lucy, Emily, and Henry to go to their house." However, go they did, as soon as their parents' backs were turned ; and Mrs. Freeman "gave them each a large piece of cake and something sweet to drink, which, she said, would do them good." But it turned out to be Cider, and did not do them good, for, "as they were never used to drink anything but water, it made them quite drunk for a little while."

The mention of Worcestershire as a cider-growing county aptly introduces my unfailing friend Lord Beaconsfield, for, though he is less precise than I could wish in praise of Cider, he compliments it indirectly in his pretty description of "a fair child, long-haired, and blushing like a Worcestershire orchard before harvest-time." Once, indeed, the lover of Disraelitish romance seems to find himself on the track of Cider. Harry Coningsby is overtaken by a thunderstorm in a forest, and, taking refuge in a sylvan inn, makes friends with a mysterious stranger. The two travellers agree to dine together, when this eminently natural dialogue ensues. "'But Ceres without Bacchus,' said Coningsby, 'how does that do? Think you, under this roof, we could invoke the god?'

"'Let us swear by his body that we will try,' said the stranger.

"Alas! the landlord was not a priest of Bacchus. But then these enquiries led to the finest Perry in the world." If only the Perry had been Cider, this quotation had been more apposite; but the themes, though not identical, are cognate.

We have traced the praise of Cider in poetry and in romance, but it also has its place in biography, and even in religious biography. One of the most delightful portraits of a saint which was ever drawn is Mrs. Oliphant's "Life of Edward Irving." In the autumn of 1834—the last autumn of his life—that Prophet and man of God made a kind of



apostolic journey through Shropshire, Herefordshire, and Wales. From Kington, in Herefordshire, he wrote to his wife: "My dinner was ham and eggs, a cold fowl, an apple tart, and cheese; a tumbler of Cider, and a glass of Sicilian Tokay." And he adds a tender reference to "Ginger Wine in a long-necked decanter." It is always satisfactory to find the good things of this life not reserved exclusively for bad people.

Sydney Smith, though a Canon of St. Paul's, was scarcely a Saint and not at all a Prophet; and through the study-windows of his beautiful parsonage in Somersetshire, he gazed on the glories of the Cider-vintage with an eye more mundane than that of Edward Irving. In 1829 he wrote from Combe Florey—"the sacred valley of flowers," as he loved to call it: "I continue to be delighted with the country. The harvest is got in without any rain. The Cider is such an enormous crop that it is sold at ten shillings a hogshead; so a human creature may lose his reason for a penny."

Cider is, I believe, still drunk at Oxford; and memory retains grateful recollections of Cider-cup beautiful as a liquid topaz, with a cluster of blue flowers floating on its breast. But the Cider-Cellars of London—places of, I fear, ill-regulated conviviality—have, as far as I know, long since closed their doors. Yet they, too, have their secure place in literature. The "Young Lion" of the *Daily Telegraph*, who looked forward to succeeding Dr. W. H. Russell as War Correspondent of the

*Times*, thrilled with excitement at the prospect of inoculating the Leading Journal with "the divine madness of our new style—the style we have formed upon Sala. It blends the airy epicureanism of the *salons* of Augustus with the full-bodied gaiety of our English Cider Cellar." But that was written in 1870, and the style and the Cellars alike are things of the past. The official historian of Cider excels in that "dry light" which is the grace of history, and gravely tells us that "Cider (*Zider*, German) when first made in England was called wine." With a proper reluctance to commit himself to what is antecedently incredible, he adds that "the Earl of Manchester, when Ambassador in France (1699), *is said* to have passed off Cider for Wine." It is more plausibly stated that in later days the innocuous apple has been artfully mingled with the "foaming grape of Eastern France," and has been drunk in England as Champagne. The Hock-cup at Buckingham Palace is justly vaunted as one of the chief glories of our ancient polity. It is certainly the most delectable drink that ever refreshed a thirsty soul; and the art of concocting it is a State-Secret of the most awful solemnity. But there never was a secret which did not sooner or later elude its guardians; and I have heard that a Royal cellarer, in an expansive moment, once revealed the spell. German Wine and English Cider together constitute the Kingly Cup,

"And, blended, form, with artful strife,  
The strength and harmony of life."

## XXX

### THE GARTER

“Breathes there a man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said——

I should uncommonly like to be a Knight of the Garter?” If such there be, let him forswear this column and pass on to the Cotton Market or the Education Bill. Here we cater for those in whom the historic instinct is combined with picturesque sensibility, and who love to trace the stream of the national life as it flows through long-descended rites. Lord Acton wrote finely of “Institutions which incorporate tradition and prolong the reign of the dead.” No institution fulfils this ideal more absolutely than the Order of the Garter. One need not always “commence with the Deluge”; and there is no occasion to consult the lively oracles of Mrs. Markham for the story of the dropped garter and the chivalrous motto. It is enough to remember that the Order links the last enchantments of the Middle Age with the Twentieth Century, and that for at least four hundred years it has played a real, though hidden, part in the secret strategy of English Statecraft.

We are told by travellers that the Emperor of Lilliput rewarded his courtiers with three fine silken threads of about six inches long, one of which was blue, one red, and one green. The method by which these rewards were obtained is thus described by an eye-witness: "The Emperor holds a stick in his hands, both ends parallel to the horizon, while the candidates, advancing one by one, sometimes leap over it, sometimes creep under it, backwards and forwards, several times, according as the stick is elevated or depressed. Whoever shows the most agility and performs his part best of leaping and creeping is rewarded with the blue coloured silk, the next with the red, and so on."

To-day we are not concerned with the red silk, wisely invented by Sir Robert Walpole for the benefit of those who could not aspire to the blue; nor with the green, which illustrates the continuous and separate polity of the Northern Kingdom. The blue silk supplies us with all the material we shall need. In its wider aspect of the Blue Ribbon, it has its secure place in the art, the history, and the literature of England; though perhaps the Dryasdusts of future ages will be perplexed by the Manichæan associations which will then have gathered round it. "When," they will ask, "and by what process, did the ensign of a high chivalric Order which originated at a banquet become the symbol of total abstinence from fermented drinks?" Even so, a high-toned

damsel from the State of Maine, regarding the Blue Ribbon which girt Lord Granville's white waistcoat, congratulated him on the boldness with which he displayed his colours, and then shrank back in astonished horror as he raised his claret-glass to his lips. In one of the prettiest of historical novels Amy Robsart is represented as examining with childish wonder the various badges and decorations which her husband wears, while Leicester, amused by her simplicity, explains the significance of each. "The embroidered strap, as thou callest it, around my knee," he said, "is the English Garter, an ornament which Kings are proud to wear. See, here is the star which belongs to it, and here is the diamond George, the jewel of the Order. You have heard how King Edward and the Countess of Salisbury——" "Oh, I know all that tale," said the Countess, slightly blushing, "and how a lady's garter became the proudest badge of English chivalry."

There are certain families which may be styled "Garter Families," so constant—almost unbroken—has been the tradition that the head of the family should be a Knight Companion of the Most Noble Order. Such is the House of Beaufort; is there not a great saloon at Badminton walled entirely with portraits of Dukes of Beaufort in their flowing mantles of Garter-Blue? Such is the House of Bedford, which has worn the Garter from the reign of Henry VIII. till now; such the House of Norfolk, which contrived to retain its

Garters, though it often lost its head, in times of civil commotion. The Dukes of Devonshire, again, have been habitual Garter-wearers; and the fourteenth Earl of Derby, though he refused a dukedom, was proud to accept an extra Garter (raising the number of Knights above the statutory twenty-five), which Queen Victoria gave him as a consolation for his eviction from the Premiership in 1859. *Punch*, then, as now, no respecter of persons, had an excellent cartoon of a blubbering child, to whom a gracious lady soothingly remarks, "Did he have a nasty tumble, then? Here's something pretty for him to play with." The Percys, again, were pre-eminently a Garter Family; sixteen heads of the house have worn Blue silk. So far as the male line was concerned, they came to an end in 1670. The eventual heiress of the house married Sir Hugh Smithson, who acquired the estates and assumed the name of the historic Percys. Having, in virtue of this great alliance, been created Earl of Northumberland, Sir Hugh begged George III. to give him the Garter. When the King demurred, the aspirant exclaimed, in the bitterness of his heart, "I am the first Northumberland who ever was refused the Garter." To which the King replied, not unreasonably, "And you are the first Smithson who ever asked for it." However, there are forms of political pressure to which even Kings must yield, and people who had "borough influence" could generally get their way when George III. wanted some trustworthy votes in the House of Commons. So Sir Hugh Smithson

died a Duke and a K.G., and since his day the Percys have been continuously Gartered.

But it is in the sphere of rank just below that of the "Garter Families" that the Blue silk of Swift's imagination exercises its most potent influence. Men who are placed by the circumstances of their birth far beyond the temptations of mere cupidity, men who are justly satisfied with their social position and have no special wish to be transmogrified into marquises or dukes, are found to desire the Garter with an almost passionate fondness. Many a curious vote in a stand-or-fall division, many an unexpected declaration at a political crisis, many a transfer of local influence at an important election has been dictated by calculations about a possible Garter. It was this view of the decoration which inspired Lord Melbourne when, to the suggestion that he should take a vacant Garter for himself, he replied, "But why should I? I don't want to bribe myself." This same light-hearted statesman disputes with Lord Palmerston the credit of having said, "The great beauty of the Garter is that there's no d—d nonsense of merit about it;" but it was undoubtedly Palmerston who declined to pay the customary fees to the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, and on being gravely told that, unless he paid, his banner could not be erected in St. George's Chapel, replied that, as he never went to church at Windsor or anywhere else, the omission would not much affect him.

What made the recent Chapter of the Garter peculiarly exciting to such as have æsthetic as well as historic minds was the fact that, for once, the Knights might be seen in the full splendour of their magnificent costume. No other Order has so elaborate a paraphernalia, and every detail smacks deliciously of the antique world. The long, sweeping mantle of Garter-blue is worn over a surcoat and hood of crimson velvet. The hat is trimmed with ostrich feathers and heron's plumes. The enamelled collar swings majestically from shoulder to shoulder; from it depends the image of St. George trampling down the dragon; and round the left knee runs the Garter itself, setting forth the motto of the Order in letters of gold. It is a truly regal costume; and those who saw Lord Spencer so arrayed at the Coronation of King Edward might have fancied that they were gazing on an animated Vandyke. These full splendours of the Order are seldom seen, but some modifications of them appear on stated occasions. The King was married in the mantle of the Garter, worn over a Field-Marshal's uniform; and a similar practice is observed at ceremonies in St. George's Chapel. The Statutes of the Order bind every Knight, on his chivalric obedience, to wear the badge—the "George," as it is technically called—at all times and places. In obedience to this rule the Marquis of Abercorn, who died in 1818, always went out shooting in the Blue Ribbon from which, in ordinary dress, the badge depends. But those



were the days when people played cricket in tall hats and attended the House of Commons in knee-breeches and silk stockings. Prince Albert, whose conscience in ceremonial matters was even painfully acute, always wore his Blue Ribbon over his shirt and below his waistcoat; and in his ancient photographs it can be dimly traced crossing his chest in the neighbourhood of his shirt studs. But to-day one chiefly sees it at dinners. A tradition of the Order requires a Knight dining with a brother-Knight to wear it, and after dinner one may meet it at an evening party. The disuse of knee-breeches, except in Royal company, makes it practically impossible to display the actual Garter; unless one chooses to follow the example of the seventh Duke of Bedford, who, being of a skinny habit and feeling the cold intensely, yet desiring to display his Garter, used to wear it buckled round the trouser of his left leg. Lord Beaconsfield, in his later years, used to appear in the evening with a most magnificent Star of the Garter which had belonged to the wicked Lord Hertford, Thackeray's Steyne and his own Monmouth. It was a constellation of picked diamonds, surrounding St. George's Cross in rubies. After Lord Beaconsfield's death it was exposed for sale in a jeweller's window, and eventually was broken up and sold piecemeal. There was an opportunity missed. Lord Rosebery ought to have bought it, and kept it by him until he was entitled to wear it.

In picture-galleries one can trace the evolution

of the Blue Ribbon through several shades and shapes. In pictures of the Tudor and Stuart periods it is a light blue ribbon, worn round the neck, with the George hanging, like a locket, in front. In Georgian pictures the ribbon is much darker, and is worn over the left shoulder, reaching down to the right thigh, where the George is displayed. I have heard that the alteration of position was due to the Duke of Monmouth, who, when a little boy, accidentally thrust his right arm through the ribbon, with a childish grace which fascinated his father. The change of colour was due to the fact that the exiled King at St. Germain's affected still to bestow the Order, and the English ribbon was made darker, so as to obviate all possible confusion between the reality and the counterfeit. Of late years, this reason having ceased to operate, the King has returned to the lighter shade.

The last Commoner who wore the Garter was Sir Robert Walpole. Sir Robert Peel refused it. It is the only honour which, I think, Mr. Gladstone could have accepted without loss of dignity. For he truly was a Knight *sans peur et sans reproche*, worthy to rank with those to whom, in the purer days of chivalry, the Cross of St. George was not the reward of an intrigue but the symbol of a faith.

## XXXI

### SHERIFFS

THE late Mr. Evelyn Philip Shirley, of Ettington, the most enthusiastic and cultured of English antiquaries, was once describing the procedure observed on the rare occasion of a "Free Conference" between the Houses of Parliament. "The Lords," he said, "sit with their hats on their heads. The Commons stand, uncovered, at the Bar; and the carpet is spread not on the floor but on the table, illustrating the phrase 'on the *tapis*.' Those are the things which make life really worth living."

I cannot profess to equal Mr. Shirley in culture, but I yield to no man in enthusiasm for antiquarian rites. Like Burke, I "piously believe in the mysterious virtue of wax and parchment." With Mr. Gladstone, I say that "the principle which gives us ritual in Religion gives us the ceremonial of Courts, the costume of judges, the uniform of regiments, all the language of heraldry and symbol, all the hierarchy of rank and title."

My antiquarian enthusiasm for the Garter must not be allowed to brush aside the more obvious

topic of the Sheriffs. That just now<sup>1</sup> is a topic which, as the French say, palpitates with actuality. November is the Sheriffs' month; in it they bloom like chrysanthemums—doomed, alas! to as brief a splendour. The Sheriffs of London and Middlesex—those glorious satellites who revolve round the Lord Mayor of London as the Cardinals round the Pope—are already installed. Their state carriages of dazzling hue, and their liveries stiff with gold bullion, have flung their radiance (as the late Mr. J. R. Green would have said) over the fog and filth of our autumnal climate.

“Who asketh why the Beautiful was made?  
 A wan cloud drifting o'er the waste of blue,  
 The thistledown that floats along the glade,  
 The lilac blooms of April—fair to view,  
 And naught but fair are these; and such I  
 ween are you.  
 Yes, ye are beautiful. The young street boys  
 Joy in your beauty——”

But I am becoming rhapsodical, and with less excuse than “C. S. C.,” whose poetic fire was kindled by the sight of the Beadles in the Burlington Arcade.

On Monday the 12th of November, being the morrow of St. Martin, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in clothing of wrought gold and figured silk, attending the ghost of what was once the Court of Exchequer, nominates three gentlemen of good estate to serve the office of High Sheriff

<sup>1</sup> November 1896.

for each of the counties of England. Be it remarked in passing that the robe of black and gold which the Chancellor wears on this occasion is that which Mr. Gladstone's statue in the Strand represents, and which, as a matter of fact, he wore at the opening of the Law Courts in December 1882, when, to the astonishment of the unlearned, he walked in procession among the Judges.

Early in the new year—on “the morrow of the Purification” to wit—the Lord President of the Council submits the names of the nominated Sheriffs, duly engrossed on parchment, to the King, who then, with a silver bodkin, “pricks” the name of the gentleman who in each county seems the fittest of the three for the august and perilous office of High Sheriff.

I love to handle great things greatly ; so I have refreshed my memory with the constitutional lore of this high theme. The etymology of “Sheriff” I find to be (on the indisputable authority of Dr. Dryasdust) “Scirgeréfa—the ‘Reeve’ or Fiscal Officer of a Shire.” In the Saxon twilight of our national history this Reeve, not yet developed into Sheriff, ranked next in his county to the Bishop and the Ealdorman, or Earl. In those days of rudimentary self-government, the Reeve was elected by popular vote, but Edward II., who seems to have been a bureaucrat before his time, abolished the form of election except as regards the cities, and from his time onwards the High Sheriff of a

county has been a nominated officer. Until the days of the Tudors, the High Sheriff wielded great and miscellaneous powers. He was the military head of the county. He commanded the "Posse Comitatus," in which at his bidding every male over fifteen was forced to serve; and he was, in all matters of civil and criminal jurisdiction, the executant and minister of the law.

*Quomodo ceciderunt fortes!* Henry VIII. at one fell swoop terminated the Sheriff's military power and made the new-fangled Lord-Lieutenant commander of the local forces; and successive Acts of Parliament have, by increasing the powers of courts and magistracies, reduced the civil power of the Sheriff to a dismal shadow of its former greatness. Still, in the person of his unromantic representative, the "Bound Bailiff," he watches the execution of civil process in the case of those who, to use a picturesque phrase, have "outrun the constable"; still, with all the pantomimic pomp of coach and footmen, trumpeters and javelin-men, he conducts the Judges of Assize to and from the court; and still he must be present in court when the capital sentence is pronounced. I believe I am right in stating that there is no such document as a "Death-warrant" known to English jurisprudence. The only warrant for the execution of a felon is the verbal sentence of the Judge pronounced in open court; and, as the High Sheriff is responsible for the due execution of that sentence, he must be present when it is pronounced, in order

that he may know, by the evidence of his own eyes, that the person brought out for execution is the person on whom the sentence was pronounced. It is probable that many of my readers recollect the first Lord Tollemache, a man who combined singular gifts of physical strength with a delicate humanitarianism. He had been High Sheriff of Cheshire in very early life, and, till he was elevated to the Peerage, it was possible that his turn might come round again. Contemplating this contingency, he said that if he were again charged with the execution of a capital sentence, he should, on his own authority, offer the condemned man a dose of chloroform, so that, if he chose, he might go unconscious to his doom.

The duties connected with the capital sentence are, of course, infinitely the most trying of those which befall a High Sheriff; but even in other respects his lot is not an unmixed pleasure. If he is a poor man, the expense of conducting the Assizes with proper dignity is considerable. A sensitive man does not like to hear invidious comparisons between his carriages, horses, and liveries, and those of his predecessor in office. He winces under the imputation of an unworthy economy; and, if his equipage was conspicuously unequal to the occasion, the Judges have been known to express their displeasure by sarcasms, protests, and even fines. The fining power of a Judge on circuit is a mysterious prerogative. I have no notion whether it is restrained by statu-

tory limitations, by what process the fine is enforced, or into whose pocket it finds its way. Some years ago the High Sheriff of Surrey published a placard at the Guildford Assizes setting forth that the public were excluded from the court by the judge's order and in defiance of law, and warning his subordinate officers against giving effect to the order for exclusion. The Judge pronounced the placard "a painfully contumacious contempt of the Court," and fined the High Sheriff £500. My memory does not recall, and the records do not state, whether the mulcted officer paid up or climbed down.

If the High Sheriff has a friend or kinsman in Holy Orders, the Assizes afford an excellent opportunity of bringing him to public notice in the capacity of Sheriff's Chaplain; for the Chaplain preaches before the Judges at the opening of the Assize, and, if he is ambitious of fame, he can generally contrive to make something of the occasion. But few Chaplains, I should think, have emulated the courage of Sydney Smith, who at the York Assizes in 1824 rebuked the besetting sins of Bench and Bar in two remarkably vigorous sermons on these suggestive themes—"The Judge that smites contrary to the Law" and "The Lawyer that tempted Christ."

Broadly, I suppose it may be said that the people who really enjoy being High Sheriffs are not those who, by virtue of long hereditary connexion with the soil, are to the manner born;



but rather those who by commercial industry have accumulated capital, and have invested it in land with a view to founding a family. To such, the hospitalities paid and the deference received, the quaint splendour of the Assize, and the undisputed precedence over the gentlemen of the County, are joys not lightly to be esteemed. When Lothair was arranging the splendid ceremonial for his famous Coming of Age, he said to the Duchess, "There is no doubt that, in the County, the High Sheriff takes precedence of every one, even of the Lord-Lieutenant; but how about his wife? I believe there is some tremendous question about the lady's precedence. We ought to have written to the Heralds' College." The Duchess graciously gave Mrs. High Sheriff the benefit of the doubt, and the ceremonies went forward without a hitch. On the night of the great banquet Lothair looked round, and then, "in an audible voice, and with a stateliness becoming such an incident, called upon the High Sheriff to lead the Duchess to the table. Although that eminent man had been thinking of nothing else for days, and during the last half-hour had felt as a man feels, and can only feel, who knows that some public function is momentarily about to fall to his perilous discharge, he was taken quite aback, changed colour, and lost his head. But Lothair's band, who were waiting at the door of the apartment to precede the procession to the hall, striking up at this moment "The Roast

Beef of Old England," reanimated his heart, and, following Lothair and preceding all the other guests down the gallery and through many chambers, he experienced the proudest moment in a life of struggle, ingenuity, vicissitude, and success."

## XXXII

### PUBLISHERS

THERE is a passage in Selden's "Table-Talk" which, if I recollect it aright, may be paraphrased in some such form as this: The Lion, reeking of slaughter, met his neighbour the Sheep, and, after exchanging the time of day with her, asked her if his breath smelt of blood. She replied "Yes," whereupon he snapped off her head for a fool. Immediately afterwards he met the Jackal, to whom he addressed the same question. The Jackal answered "No," and the Lion tore him in pieces for a flatterer. Last of all he met the Fox, and asked the question a third time. The Fox replied that he had a cold in his head, and could smell nothing. *Moral*: "Wise men say little in dangerous times." The bearing of this aphorism on my present subject is sufficiently obvious; the "times" — not *Times* — are "dangerous" alike for authors and publishers, and "wise men" will "say little" about current controversies, lest they should have their heads snapped off by Mr. Lucas and Mr. Graves, or be torn in pieces by Mr. Moberley Bell.

Thus warned, I turn my thoughts to Publishers

as they have existed in the past, and more particularly to their relations with the authors whose works they have given to the world. How happy those relations may be, when maintained with tact and temper on both sides, is well illustrated by an anecdote of that indefatigable penwoman, "the gorgeous Lady Blessington." Thinking herself injured by some delay on the part of her publishers, Messrs. Sanders & Otley, she sent her son-in-law, the irrepressible Count D'Orsay, to remonstrate. The Count was received by a dignified gentleman in a stiff white cravat, whom he proceeded to assail with the most vigorous invective, until the cravated gentleman could stand it no longer and roundly declared that he would sacrifice Lady Blessington's patronage sooner than subject himself to personal insult. "Personal?" exclaimed the lively Count. "There's nothing personal in my remarks. If you're Sanders, then d—— Otley; if you're Otley, then d—— Sanders."

It is to be feared that a similar imprecation has often formed itself in the heart, though it may not have issued from the lips, of a balked and disillusioned author. Though notoriously the most long-suffering of a patient race, the present writer has before now felt inclined to borrow the vigorous invective of Count D'Orsay. Some six months before American copyright was, after long negotiation, secured for English authors, Messrs. Popgood and Groolly (I borrow the names from Sir Frank Burnand) arranged with me for the publication of

a modest work. It was quite ready for publication, but the experienced publishers pointed out the desirability of keeping it back till the new law of copyright came into force, for there was a rich harvest to be reaped in America; and all the American profits, after, say, five thousand copies were sold, were to be mine alone. A year later I received a cheque, 18s. 6d., which, I imagine, bore the same relation to the American profits as Mrs. Crupp's "one cold kidney on a cheese-plate" bore to the remains of David Copperfield's feast. On enquiry I was soothingly informed by Popgood and Groolly that the exact number of copies sold in America was 5005, and that the cheque represented (as per agreement) the royalty on the copies sold, over and above the first five thousand. That the publishers should have so accurately estimated the American sale seemed to me a remarkable instance of commercial foresight.

Not much more amiable are the feelings of the author towards the publisher who declines his wares; and I have always felt that Washington Irving must have had a keen and legitimate satisfaction in prefixing to his immensely popular "Sketch-Book" the flummery in which old John Murray wrapped up his refusal of the manuscript:—

"I entreat you to believe that I feel truly obliged by your kind intentions towards me, and that I entertain the most unfeigned respect for your most tasteful talents. If it would not suit me to engage in the publication of your present work, it is only

because I do not see that scope in the nature of it which would enable me to make those satisfactory accounts between us which I really feel no satisfaction in engaging."

Now, surely, as Justice Shallow says, good phrases are, and ever were, very commendable. While Murray dealt in good phrases, his rival Longman expressed himself through the more tangible medium of good cheques. He was the London publisher, and apparently the financier, of the *Edinburgh Review*, and, according to Sydney Smith's testimony, his fiscal system was simplicity itself. "I used to send in a bill in these words, 'Messrs. Longman & Co. to the Rev. Sydney Smith. To a very wise and witty article on such a subject; so many sheets, at forty-five guineas a sheet,' and the money always came." Here is another passage from the financial dealings of the same great house, which during the last fifty years has caused many a penman's mouth to water. On the 7th of March 1856 Macaulay wrote in his diary: "Longman came, with a very pleasant announcement. He and his partners find that they are overflowing with money, and think that they cannot invest it better than by advancing to me, on the usual terms of course, part of what will be due to me in December. We agreed that they shall pay twenty thousand pounds into Williams's Bank next week. What a sum to be gained by one edition of a book! I may say, gained in one day. But that was harvest-

day. The work had been near seven years in hand."

After that glorious instance, all tales of profit from books seem flat and insignificant. As a rule, we have to reckon our makings on a far more modest scale. "Sir," said an enthusiastic lady to Mr. Zangwill, "I admire 'The Children of the Ghetto' so much that I have read it eight times." "Madam," replied Mr. Zangwill, "I would rather you had bought eight copies." Even so, with our exiguous profit on eight copies duly sold, our state is more gracious than that of more deserving men. Here is a touching vignette from a book of travels, which was popular in my youth: "At *table d'hôte* there is a charming old gentleman who has translated Æschylus and Euripides into English verse; he has been complimented by the greatest scholars of the day, and his publishers have just sent him in his bill for printing, and a letter to know what the deuce they shall do with the first thousand."

Such are the joys of publishing at one's own risk. Hardly more exhilarating is the experience of knocking at all the doors in Paternoster Row, or Albemarle Street, or Waterloo Place, and imploring the stony-hearted publisher to purchase one's modest wares. Old John Murray's soothing formula about "most tasteful talents" has been reproduced, with suitable variations, from that time to this. No one experienced it oftener than the late Mr. Shorthouse, whose one good book—"John Inglesant"—made the rounds of the Trade, until at

length Messrs. Macmillan recognized its strange power. In their hands, as every one knows, the book prospered exceedingly, and the publishers who had rejected it were consumed by remorse. In this connexion my friend Mr. James Payn used to tell a story which outweighs a great many acrid witticisms about "Barabbas was a Publisher" and Napoleon's one meritorious action in hanging a Bookseller. Payn was "reader" to Smith and Elder, and in that capacity declined the manuscript of "John Inglesant." Some years afterwards this fact was stated in print, together with an estimate of what his error had cost his firm. Payn, who was the last man to sit down patiently under a calumny, told the late Mr. George Smith that he felt bound in self-respect to contradict a story so derogatory to his literary judgment. "If I were you," replied Mr. Smith, "I wouldn't do that, for, as a matter of fact, you did reject the manuscript, and we have lost what Macmillans have gained. I never told you, because I knew it would annoy you; and I only tell you now to prevent you from contradicting 'an ower true tale.'" Payn used to say that, in all the annals of business, considerate forbearance had never been better exemplified. Against this story of his failure to perceive merit Payn was wont to set his discovery of Mr. Anstey Guthrie. The manuscript of "Vice Versa," bearing the unknown name of "F. Anstey," came in ordinary course into his hands. He glanced at the first page, turned over, read to the end, and then



ran into Mr. Smith's room saying, "We've got the funniest thing that has been written since Dickens's 'Christmas Carol.'" And the public gave unequivocal evidence that it concurred in the verdict.

Let a "smooth tale of love" close these reminiscences of Publishers. Some forty years ago, when all young and ardent spirits had caught the sacred fire of Italian freedom from Garibaldi and Swinburne and Mrs. Browning, a young lady, nurtured in the straitest of Tory homes, was inspired—it is hardly too strong a word—to write a book of ballads in which the heroes and the deeds of the Italian Revolution were glorified. She knew full well that, if she were detected, her father would have a stroke and her mother would lock her up in the spare bedroom. So, in sending her manuscript to a publisher, she passed herself off as a man. Her vigorous and vehement style, her strong grasp of the political situation, and her enjoyment of battle and bloodshed, contributed to the illusion; her poems were published anonymously; other volumes followed; and for several years the publisher addressed his contributor as "Esquire." At length it chanced that both publisher and poetess were staying, unknown to each other, at the same seaside place. Her letter, written from—let us say—Brighton, reached him at Brighton; so, instead of answering by post, he went to the hotel and asked for Mr. Talbot, or whatever great Tory name you prefer. The porter said, "There is no Mr. Talbot staying here. There is a Miss Talbot, and

she may be able to give you some information." So Miss Talbot was produced ; the secret of the authorship was disclosed ; and the negotiations took an entirely new turn, which ended in making the poetess the publisher's wife.

## XXXIII

### HANDWRITING

WHEN "The Book of Snobs" was appearing week by week in *Punch*, Thackeray derived constant aid from suggestive correspondents. "'Why only attack the aristocratic Snobs?' says one estimable gentleman. 'Are not the snobbish Snobs to have their turn?' 'Pitch into the University Snobs!' writes an indignant correspondent (who spells *elegant* with two *l*'s)."

Similarly, if I may compare small things with great, I am happy in the possession of an unknown friend who, from time to time, supplies me with references to current topics which he thinks suitable to my gentle methods of criticism. My friend (unlike Thackeray's correspondent) can spell *elegant*, and much longer words too, with faultless accuracy, and is altogether, as I judge, a person of much culture. It is this circumstance, I suppose (for he has no earthly connexion with the Army), which makes him feel so keenly about a cutting from a newspaper which he has just sent us:—

"In a report just issued by the War Office on the result of examinations for promotion many

officers are said to be handicapped by their bad handwriting. Some show of 'want of intelligence, small power of expression, poor penmanship—in fact, appear to suffer from defective education.'

"On the other hand, the work of non-commissioned officers shows intelligence and power of concise expression, while penmanship is good.

"But the percentage of failures among the officers shows a large decrease—from 22 per cent. in November 1904 to 13 per cent. in May last. The improvement is particularly noticeable among lieutenants. It is apparent, says the report, that a serious effort is being made by the commissioned ranks to master all the text-books and other aids to efficiency."

"This," says my correspondent, "is a shameful disclosure. Cannot you say something about it in print?" Inclining naturally to the more favourable view of my fellow-creatures, I prefer to reflect, not on the "poor penmanship" and "defective education" of my military friends, but on their manly efforts after self-improvement. There is something at once pathetic and edifying in the picture of these worthy men, each of whom has probably cost his father £200 a year for education ever since he was ten years old, making their "serious effort to master the text-books and other aids to efficiency," in the humble hope that their writing may some day rival that of the non-commissioned officers.

It was not ever thus. These laudable, though

lowly, endeavours after Culture are of recent growth in the British Army. Fifty years ago, if we may trust contemporary evidence, the Uneducated Subaltern developed, by a natural process, into the Uneducated General.

“I have always,” said Thackeray in 1846, “admired that dispensation of rank in our country which sets up a budding Cornet, who is shaving for a beard (and who was flogged only last week because he could not spell), to command great whiskered warriors who have faced all dangers of climate and battle.” *Because he could not spell.* The same infirmity accompanied the Cornet into the higher grades of his profession—witness Captain Rawdon Crawley’s memorandum of his available effects: “My double-barril by Manton, say 40 guineas; my duelling pistols in rosewood case (same which I shot Captain Marker) £20.” And, even when the Cornet had blossomed into a General, his education was still far from complete: “A man can’t help being a fool, be he ever so old, and Sir George Tufto is a greater ass at sixty-eight than he was when he entered the army at fifteen. He never read a book in his life, and, with his purple, old, gouty fingers, still writes a schoolboy hand.”

But do Soldiers write a worse hand than other people? I rather doubt it, and certain I am that several of my friends, highly placed in Church and politics and law, would do very well to apply themselves for a season to those “text-books and

other aids to efficiency" by which the zealous Subaltern seeks to complete his "defective education."

Mr. Gladstone was accustomed to say that in public life he had known only two perfect things—Sir Robert Peel's voice and Lord Palmerston's writing. The former we can know only by tradition; the latter survives, for the instruction of mankind, in folios of voluminous despatches, all written in a hand at once graceful in form and absolutely clear to read. "The wayfaring men" of Diplomacy, though sometimes "fools," could not "err" in the interpretation of Palmerston's despatches. The same excellence of calligraphy which Palmerston himself practised he rightly required from his subordinates. If a badly written despatch came into his hands, he would embellish it with scathing rebukes, and return it, through the Office, to the offending writer. The recipient of one of these admonitions thus recalls its terms, "Tell the gentleman who copied this despatch to write a larger, rounder hand, to join the letters in the words, and to use blacker ink."

If Lord Palmerston stood easily first among the penmen of his time, the credit of writing the worst hand in England was divided among at least three claimants. First there was Lord Houghton, whose strange, tall, upright strokes, all exactly like each other except in so far as they leaned in different directions, Lord Tennyson likened to "walking-sticks gone mad." Then

there was my dear friend Mr. James Payn, who described his own hand only too faithfully when he wrote about "the wandering of a centipede which had just escaped from the inkpot and had scrawled and sprawled over the paper," and whose closest friends always implored him to correspond by telegraph. And, finally, there was the "bad eminence" of Dean Stanley, whose lifelong indulgence in hieroglyphics inflicted a permanent loss on literature. The Dean, as all readers of his biography will remember, had a marked turn for light and graceful versification. The albums and letter-caskets of his innumerable friends were full of these "occasional" verses, in which domestic, political, and ecclesiastical events were prettily perpetuated. After his death his sister, Mrs. Vaughan, tried to collect these fugitive pieces in a Memorial Volume, but an unforeseen difficulty occurred. In many cases the recipients of the poems were dead and gone, and no living creature could decipher the Dean's writing. So what might have been a pretty and instructive volume perished untimely.

Jane Maxwell, Duchess of Gordon, the brilliant dame who raised the Gordon Highlanders and who played on the Tory side the part which the Duchess of Devonshire played among the Whigs, had, like our English Subalterns, a very imperfect education; but with great adroitness she covered her deficiencies with a cloak of seeming humour. "Whenever," she wrote to Sir Walter Scott, "I

come to a word which I cannot spell, I write it as near as I can, and put a note of exclamation after it; so that, if it's wrong, my friend will think that I was making a joke." A respected member of the present Cabinet who shares Duchess Jane's orthographical weakness covers his retreat by drawing a long, involuted line after the initial letter of each word. Let the reader write, say, the word "aluminium" on this principle; and he will see how very easily imperfect spelling in high places may be concealed.

With soldiers this chapter began, and with a soldier it shall end—the most illustrious of them all, Arthur, Duke of Wellington. Let it be recorded for the encouragement of our modern Subalterns that the Duke, though he spelled much better than Captain Crawley, wrote quite as badly as Sir George Tufto; but that circumstance did not—as is sometimes the case—enable him to interpret by sympathy the hieroglyphics of other people. Is there any one left, "In a Lancashire Garden" or elsewhere, who recalls the honoured name of Jane Loudon, authoress of "The Lady's Companion to her Flower Garden"? Mrs. Loudon was an accomplished lady, who wrote not only on Floriculture, but on Arboriculture and Landscape Gardening, and illustrated what she wrote. In one of her works she desired to insert a sketch of the "Waterloo Beeches" at Strathfieldsaye—a picturesque clump planted to commemorate our deliverance from the Corsican Tyrant. Accord-



ingly she wrote to the Duke of Wellington, requesting leave to sketch the breeches, and signed herself, in her usual form, "J. Loudon." The Duke, who, in spite of extreme age and perceptions not quite so clear as they had once been, insisted on conducting all his own correspondence, replied as follows :—

"F.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to the Bishop of London. The Bishop is quite at liberty to make a sketch of the breeches which the Duke wore at Waterloo, if they can be found. But the Duke is not aware that they differed in any way from the breeches which he generally wears."

## XXXIV

### AUTOGRAPHS

FROM handwriting in general to autographs in particular the transition is natural, almost inevitable. My recent reflections on the imperfect penmanship of the British officer sent me to my collection of letters, and the sight of these autographs—old friends long since hidden away—set me on an interesting enquiry. Was there any affinity between the writing and the character? Could one, in any case, have guessed who the writer was, or what he did, merely by scrutinizing his manuscript? I make no pretension to any skill in the art or science of Caligraphy; and, regarding my letters merely as an amateur or non-expert, I must confess that I arrive at a mixed and dubious result. Some of the autographs are characteristic enough; some seem to imply qualities for which the writer was not famed and to suppress others for which he was notorious.

Let us look carefully at the first letter which I produce from my hoard. The lines are level, and the words are clearly divided, although here and there an abbreviation tells that the hand which

wrote this letter had many letters to write; the capitals, of which there are plenty, are long and twirling, though the intermediate letters are rather small, and the signature is followed by an emphatic dash which seems to say more explicitly than words that the writer is one who cannot be ignored. This is the autograph of Queen Victoria in those distant days when she said, "They seem to think that I am a schoolgirl, but I will teach them that I am Queen of England."

Surrounding and succeeding Queen Victoria I find a cluster of minor royalties, but a study of their autographs does not enable me to generalize about royal writing. Some are scrawling and some are cramped; some are infantine and some foreign. Here is a level, firm, and rapid hand, in which the exigencies of a copious correspondence seem to have softened the stiffness of a military gait. The letter is dated from "The Horse Guards," and the signature is

"Yours very truly,

GEORGE."

But here again we cannot generalize, for nothing can be more dissimilar than the Duke's hurried, high-shouldered characters and the exquisite piece of penmanship which lies alongside of them. This is written in a leisurely and cultivated hand, with due spaces between words and paragraphs, like the writing of a scholar and man of letters;

it is dated May 29, 1888, and bears the signature of

"Your affectionate Cousin,  
ALBEMARLE,"

the last survivor but one of Waterloo.

But soldiers are not much in my way, and my military signatures are few. My collection is rich in politicians. Here comes, first in date though in nothing else, that Duke of Bedford who negotiated the Treaty of Fontainebleau and got trounced by Junius for his pains. It is written in 1767, just as the writer is "setting out from Woburn Abbey to consult his Shropshire oculist" (why Shropshire?), and has the small, cramped character which is common to so many conditions of shortened sight. (I find exactly the same in a letter of Lord Chancellor Hatherley, 1881.) Thirty-nine years pass, and William Pitt writes his last letter from "Putney Hill, the 1st of January, 1806, 2 P.M.," the writing as clear, as steady, and as beautifully formed as if the "Sun of Austerlitz" had never dawned. And now the Statesmen pass me in rapid succession and in fine disregard of chronological order. Lord Russell writes a graceful, fluent, rather feminine hand; Charles Villiers's writing is of the same family; and the great Lord Derby's a perfect specimen of the "Italian hand," delicate as if drawn with a crow-quill, and slanted into alluring tails and loops. Lord Brougham's was a vile scrawl, with half the

letters tumbling backwards. John Bright's is small, neat, and absolutely clear ; nor is it fanciful to surmise that Mr. Chamberlain copied Mr. Bright, and were they not both short-sighted men ? And Lord Goschen's writing, from the same cause, is smaller still. The Duke of Argyll wrote a startling and imperious hand, worthy of a Highland chief whose ancestors not so long ago exercised the power of life and death ; Lord Iddesleigh a neat and orderly hand, becoming a Private Secretary or Permanent Official. Lord Granville's and Mr. Forster's writings had this in common, that they looked most surprisingly candid and straightforward. The present Duke of Devonshire's writing suggests nothing but vanity, self-consciousness, and ostentation. We all can judge, even without being caligraphists, how far these suggestions conform to the facts. By far the most pleasing autograph of all the Statesmen is Lord Beaconsfield's, artistically formed and highly finished—in his own phrase, "that form of scripture which attracts." With the utmost possible loyalty to a lost leader, I would submit that Mr. Gladstone wrote an uncommonly bad hand—not bad in point of appearance, for it was neat and comely even when it was hurried ; but bad morally—a kind of caligraphic imposture, for it looks quite remarkably legible, and it is only when you come to close quarters with it and try to decipher an important passage that you find that all the letters are practically the same, and that

the interpretation of a word must depend on the context.

From my pile of Statesmen's autographs I extract yet another, and I lay it side by side with the autographs of a great author and a great ecclesiastic. All three are very small, exquisitely neat, very little slanted, absolutely legible. Well as I knew the three writers, I doubt if I could tell which wrote which letter. They were Cardinal Manning, Mr. Froude, and Lord Rosebery. Will the experts in caligraphy tell me if, in this case, similarity of writing bodied forth similarity of gifts or qualities? Another very close similarity may be observed between the writing of Lord Halsbury and that of Lord Brampton (better known as Sir Henry Hawkins), which, but for the fact that Lord Brampton uses the long "s" and Lord Halsbury does not, are pretty nearly identical.

If there is one truth which can be deduced more confidently than another from my collection of autographs, it is that there is no such thing as "the literary hand." Every variety of writing which a "Reader's" fevered brain could conceive is illustrated in my bundle of literary autographs. *Seniores priores*. Samuel Rogers was born in 1763, and died in 1855. A note of his, written in 1849, and beginning, "Pray, pray, come on Tuesday," is by far the most surprising piece of caligraphy in my collection. It is so small that, except under the eyes of early youth, it requires a magnifying-glass; yet the symmetry of every letter is perfect, and,

when sufficiently enlarged, it might stand as a model of beautiful and readable writing. I take a bound of sixty years, and find some of the same characteristics reproduced by my friend Mr. Quiller-Couch; but between the "Pleasures of Memory" and "Green Bays" there rolls a sea of literature, and it has been navigated by some strange crafts in the way of handwriting. I have spoken on another occasion of Dean Stanley, Lord Houghton, and James Payn; specimens of their enormities surround me as I write, and I can adduce, I think, an equally heinous instance. Here is Sydney Smith, writing in 1837 to "Dear John," the hero of the Reform Act, "No body wishes better for you and yours than the inhabitants of Combe Florey." Perhaps so; but they conveyed their benedictions through a very irritating medium, for Sydney Smith's writing is of the immoral type, pleasing to the eye and superficially legible, but, when once you have lost the clue, a labyrinth. Perhaps it is due to this circumstance that his books abound, beyond all others, in uncorrected misprints.

But there are other faults in writing besides ugliness and illegibility. A great man ought not to write a poor hand. Yet nothing can be poorer than Ruskin's—mean, ugly, insignificant—only redeemed by perfect legibility. Goldwin Smith's, though clear and shapely, is characterless and disappointing. Some great scholars, again, write disappointing hands. Jowett's is a spiteful-looking

angular, little scratch, perfectly easy to read ; Westcott's comely but not clear ; Lightfoot's an open, scrambling scrawl, something like the late Lord Derby's. These great men cannot excuse their deficiencies in penmanship by pleading that they have had to write a great deal in their lives. Others before them have had to do that, and have emerged from the trial without a stain on their caligraphy. For example—"Albany, December 3, 1854," is the heading of an ideally beautiful sheet, every letter perfectly formed, all spaces duly observed, and the whole evidently maintaining its beauty in spite of breakneck speed. The signature is

"Ever yours truly,

T. B. MACAULAY."

Here is a letter addressed to me only last year by a man who was born in 1816. In my whole collection there is no clearer or prettier writing. As a devotee of fine penmanship, I make my salutations to Sir Theodore Martin.



## XXXV

### MORE AUTOGRAPHS

MY suggestive friend has suddenly been multiplied a hundredfold. Handwriting is a subject which apparently makes a wide appeal. Each post brings me corrections or corroborations of what I wrote last Saturday. Fresh instances of enormity in the way of illegible writing are adduced from all quarters; nor are there wanting acrid critics who suggest that reform should begin at home, and that "the Author of Collections and Recollections" would do well to consult a writing-master, or to have his copy typed before it goes to the printers. Waiving these personalities, I turn again to my letter-case, and here let me say in passing that I committed a fearful indiscretion when I spoke of my "Collection" of autographs. That fatal word brought down an avalanche of "Collectors," who, hailing me as a man and a brother, propose all sorts of convenient exchanges. A gentleman who cherishes a postcard from Mr. Rudyard Kipling would exchange it for an unpublished letter of Shelley; and a maiden-lady at Weston-super-Mare, whose great-aunt corresponded with Eliza Cook, will refuse no reasonable offer.

But all these handsome propositions must be brushed aside, for I have no collection of autographs, if "collection" implies any art or system in the way in which they have been brought together, or any store of saleable duplicates. Mine are simply letters addressed to myself or to my kinsfolk, plus just a very few which have come into my hands in connexion with public business ; but, such as they are, they are full of memories and morals.

Why did very old people write so well ? I have already described the writing of Samuel Rogers, of the Waterloo Lord Albemarle, and of Sir Theodore Martin. Pretty well for octogenarian penmanship'; but I can enlarge the gallery. 'A bundle of octogenarian letters lies before me as I write. Oliver Wendell Holmes sends a tribute to Matthew Arnold. Charles Villiers accepts an invitation to dinner. Lord Norton invites me to stay at Hams. Archdeacon Denison complains of "his first attack of gout at eighty-five." Mr. Leveson-Gower at eighty-six thanks me for a review of his first book. I protest that there is not an ungraceful line—scarcely a misshaped letter—in any of these five manuscripts. Here is a small, elegant, and "taily" hand, rather like an old-fashioned lady's. The signature is

" Yours sincerely,  
EVERSLEY,"

better known as Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, the most authori-

tative Speaker the House of Commons ever had. Note that this was written in his eighty-eighth year, and he lived to buy a new pair of guns after he was ninety. Here is a strong, clear, well-defined writing, setting forth with precision and emphasis the reasons why the last Duke of Cleveland, then in his eighty-fifth year, will not give more than £5 for an object which he has been asked to help. The writing of the beloved and honoured Duke of Rutland, always graceful and regular, becomes markedly smaller, though not the least less legible, till he dies at eighty-seven. There is no more vigorous, even dashing, signature in my store than "G. J. Holyoake," written in July 1905. Close to the imperial purple of the Agitator's ink nestles, in piquant contrast, a small half-sheet of rose-pink paper bearing a Duchess's coronet and cypher. The writing is distinct and ornamental; the letter was written in 1880, and the writer was born in 1792. But the mere fact of attaining to eighty or ninety years will not absolutely guarantee, though it seems to promote, legibility of writing. My venerable friend Dean Randall, who was born in 1824, ends a letter, which certainly needs some such apology, with a disarming allusion to the "dreadful scrawl" of his "ancient MS.;" and four sides of tantalizing hieroglyphics, drawn apparently with a blunt stick, are shown by external evidence to be a letter from Canon Carter of Clewer when he had touched his ninetieth birthday.

On similarity, approaching to identity, between the writings of very dissimilar persons I have already remarked, and a further illustration comes to light as I turn over my papers. Here are two letters in the graceful and legible script of the early nineteenth century, with long S's, and capitals for all the substantives. Both are evidently the handiwork of cultivated gentlemen ; and both the writers, as a matter of fact, were clergymen. But there the resemblance stops. The one was " Jack " Russell, the well-known Sporting Parson of Exmoor ; the other was Andrew Jukes, the deepest and most influential Mystic whom the latter-day Church has seen.

When I praise gracefulness in writing I mean natural and effortless grace, such as was displayed in the writing of the late Duke of Westminster. But, if we admire writing artificially fashioned and coerced into gracefulness like a clipped yew, it would be difficult to excel the penmanship of the late George Augustus Sala, who was an engraver before he was an author ; or that of Sir A. Conan Doyle, who handles a pen as dexterously as in his surgical days he wielded the lancet. I praised just now the late Duke of Westminster's writing, and of him one might say what Scott said, in a different sense, of Byron—that he " managed his pen with the careless and negligent ease of a man of quality " ; but there is another kind of grace than that—the grace which is partly the result of mental clearness and partly of a cultured eye. Here are

two specimens of such writing, the letters so alluringly fashioned that they look, as some one said, like something good to eat ; and spaced with a care which at once makes reading easy, and testifies to clear thinking in the writer. Both are the writings of Scholars, and both of men who wrote a vast deal in their lives—Bishop Creighton and Dean Vaughan. It must have been a joy to read their Proofs. The late Dean Farrar was the only Public-School Master I ever knew who took pains with his pupils' writing and encouraged them to add grace to legibility. His own writing, small, upright, and characterful, was very pretty when he took time and pains ; but the specimen which lies before me shows sad signs of the havoc wrought by incessant writing against time.

Grace and legibility are the two chief glories of penmanship, but other attributes are not without their effect. A dashing scrawl, if only it is easy to read, suggests a soaring superiority to conventional restraints, and rather bespeaks a hero. Here are two scrawls, and each is the work of a remarkable person. One is signed "Yours truly, Jos. Cowen," and I dare say that some of my readers would see in it the index to a nature at once impetuous and imperious. But Mr. Cowen's scrawl was crowquill-work and copperplate compared with its next-door neighbour. "Accept the enclosed, dear Mr. Russell," covers the whole of one side of a sheet of letter-paper ; the ink is blue ; the paper is ribbed ; the signature, all

wreathed in gigantic flourishes and curling tails, is "Laura Thistlethwaite," and the enclosed is one of the Evangelistic Addresses of that gifted preacher who once was Laura Bell. Odd incongruities keep turning up. As I pass from the Evangelical lady-orator, I come to Father Ignatius, an Evangelical orator with a difference, but with a like tendency to scrawl. Lord Leighton's writing is also a scrawl, and, it must be confessed, an egotistical scrawl, and a very bad scrawl to read. An illegible scrawl, too, is the writing of Richard Holt Hutton, but his is not a vainglorious or commanding scrawl, but rather humble and untidy. "Henry Irving" is a signature quite culpably illegible, but "Squire Bancroft" is just irregular enough to be interesting though not unreadable.

*Per contra*, I turn to one of the most legible signatures in my possession. The writing is ugly and the letters are ill-formed, looking rather like the work of a hand which has only lately learned to write and finds the act a difficulty. But it is as clear as print, and it shows no adventitious ornamentation or self-assertive twirls. The signature is

"Yours most sincerely,  
RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL."

In this case, if in no other, the oracles of Caligraphy are set at naught. Here is a fine, twisty, twirling hand, all tails and loops, but not at all unsightly. The signature reads like "Lincoln," and only a

careful study would detect that the "L" of "Lincoln" is preceded by a circular flourish which looks like part of the L but is really a capital C. It is the signature of that great scholar, Christopher Wordsworth, Bishop of Lincoln; and I remember that, in days of ecclesiastical strife, it was once imputed to that apostolic man for vanity that he signed his name "Lincoln" like a Temporal Peer. From that day he defined the "C" more carefully.

To the last letter which I bring to light to-day a different kind of interest attaches. It is dated

"DINGLE BANK, LIVERPOOL,  
*April 13, 1888.*"

The writing is small and clear, with the upstrokes and downstrokes rather long in comparison with the level letters; but some small blurs and blots show that the letter was written in unusual haste. It ends with these words: "Smalley has written a letter full of shriekings and cursings about my innocent article; the Americans will get their notion of it from that, and I shall never be able to enter America again.

"Ever yours,  
M. A."

This was the last letter which Matthew Arnold ever wrote, and it closed a friendship which had been one of the joys and glories of my life.

## XXXVI

### CHRISTMAS

“CHRISTMAS, now,” as Mr. Brooke in “Middlemarch” might have said—“I went a good deal into that kind of thing at one time ; but I found it would carry me too far—over the hedge, in fact.” That, I imagine, pretty well represents the attitude of the adult world towards the feast which closes the year. We all loved it when we were young. Now, it is all very well for once in a way ; it might pall if frequently repeated ; even recurring only annually, it must be observed temperately and enjoyed moderately. Anything resembling excess would carry one too far—“over the hedge, in fact.” But, within these recognized and salutary limits, Christmas is an institution which I would not willingly let die. In the days of my youth a Jewish lady caused me not a little consternation by remarking that it seemed very odd for Christians to celebrate the Feast of Redemption with gluttony and drunkenness. She lived, I am bound to say, in a very unregenerate village in a remarkably savage part of the country, and as, of course, she did not go to church, I dare say that Gluttony and Drunkenness were the forms of



Christmas observance which most obtruded themselves on her notice. Even Cardinal Newman seems to have remarked the same phenomenon in his youth, though he satirized it more delicately. "Beneficed clergymen used to go to rest as usual on Christmas-eve, and leave to ringers, or sometimes to carollers, the observance which was paid, *not without creature comforts*, to the sacred night." Now all that is changed. Churches of all confessions vie with one another in the frequency and heartiness and picturesque equipment of their religious services. Even the *Daily Telegraph* preaches Christmas sermons; and I very much question whether the populace gets more drunk at Christmas than at Easter. But, though we may have learnt to celebrate the festival with rites more devout and less bibulous, we have not yet escaped my Jewish friend's reproach of gluttony. The Christmas Dinner of the British Home is still a thing imagination boggles at. The dreadful pleasantries of the aged—their sorry gibes about the doctor and the draught; hoary chestnuts about little boys who stood up to eat more—remain among the most terrible memories of the Christmas dinner. And they were quite in keeping with the dinner itself. I say nothing against the Turkey, which (as my medical friends well know) was found, by practical experiment in the case of Alexis St. Martin, to be the most easily digested of all animal foods, except venison; but surely, as a nation, we eat quite beef enough in the course of

the year without making Christmas an annual orgy of carnivorous excess. I protest that the very sight of the butchers' shops at this season of the year is enough to upset a delicately balanced organization. Rightly said the Shah, in that immortal Diary which he kept during his visit to England in 1873—"Meat is good, but it should not be hung up in windows." Macaulay used to say that Thackeray, in his famous description of the Clapham sect in "The Newcomes," made one blunder—he represented them as Dissenters, whereas, in fact, they were rather dogged Church-people. The only exception to the rule was a Baptist lady, who, living on Clapham Common, testified against the superstitions of the Established Church by eating roast veal and apple-pie on Christmas-day instead of more orthodox dainties. Churchman though I am, I protest that I think the Baptist lady was right: and I believe that the Puritans were wiser than they knew when they denounced Plum-Pudding and Mince Pies as inventions of the Evil One. Yet the love of these vindictive viands is one of the root-instincts of our English nature. Forty-eight years ago the British Army was keeping its Christmas in the Crimea, amid all the horrors and hardships of a peculiarly grim campaign. An English Sister of Mercy, who was nursing under Miss Nightingale in the Hospital at Scutari, thus described the melancholy festivity: "The 'Roast Beef of Old England' was out of the question, but with the aid of a good deal of

imagination, it seemed possible at least to secure the Plum Pudding. I think I might with safety affirm that as the doctor left the ward every man drew from under his pillow a small portion of flour and fat, with an egg and some plums, and began to concoct a Christmas pudding. I assisted many to make the pudding, whom nothing short of a miracle would enable to eat it; still they must have the thing. For some days previously I had been asked for pieces of linen, which, without dreaming of the use to which they were to be applied, I supplied. Thus were the pudding cloths provided."

It can scarcely be conceived that these unhappy soldiers, maddened by wounds and fever or perishing by frost-bite and gangrene, can have had much physical enjoyment in Christmas puddings made of materials which had been concealed under their sick pillows; in such circumstances the value of the pudding is spiritual and symbolic. A few Christmases ago I was assisting (in the literal sense) at a dinner for starving "Dockers." A more broken, jaded, and dejected crew it would be difficult to picture. They had scarcely enough energy to eat and drink, but lumbered slowly through their meal of meat-pies and coffee without a smile and almost without a word. All at once an unrehearsed feature was introduced into the rather cheerless programme, and a huge Plum Pudding, wreathed with holly and flaming blue with burnt brandy, was borne into the hall. A deep gasp of joy burst from the

assembled guests, and the whole company rose as one man and greeted the joyous vision with "Auld Lang Syne." The eating was yet to come, so the exhilaration was purely moral. The Pudding spoke at once to Memory and to Hope.

There are other adjuncts of Christmas which must by no means be overlooked—Christmas presents, for instance, and Christmas amusements. As to Christmas presents, I regard them as definite means of grace. For weeks—sometimes months—before Christmas returns we concentrate our thought on our friends instead of ourselves. We reflect on people's likes and dislikes, habits, tastes, and occupations. We tax our ingenuity to find gifts suitable for the recipients, and buy objects which we think frankly hideous in the hope of gratifying our unsophisticated friends. Happily the age of ormolu and malachite has passed. We no longer buy blotting-books made unusable by little knobs of enamel on the cover; nor gilt-paper weights which cost a hundred times more than the overweighted letters of a lifetime could amount to. Christmas gifts of this type belong to an unreturning past, and, as Walter Pater said of the wedding-present which he was expected to admire, "Very rich, very handsome, very expensive, I'm sure—but they mustn't make any more of them." Nor will they. The standard of popular taste in the matter of nick-nacks has improved as conspicuously as in that of furniture; and the fancy

shops, when spread for the Christmas market, display a really large choice of presents which one can buy without sacrificing self-respect, and give without the appearance of insult.

But Christmas presents, even at a moderate rate of charge, may, if one has a large circle of acquaintance, carry one over the hedge, as Mr. Brooke said; and here is the scope and function of the Christmas Card. Few people have bought more Christmas cards in a lifetime than the present writer; and, out of a vast experience, he would offer one word of friendly counsel to the card-sender. Do not accumulate the cards which you receive this Christmas and distribute them among your friends next Christmas, for, if you do, as sure as fate you will one day return a card to the sender; and old friendships and profitable connexions have been severed by such miscarriages.

Of Christmas amusements I can say little. My notion of them is chiefly derived from "Happy Thoughts," where Byng suggests some "Christmassy sort of thing" to amuse his guests, and fails to gratify even his Half-Aunt. My infancy was spent in the country, remote from Dances and Theatres, Pantomimes and Panoramas. "The Classic Walls of Old Drury" never welcomed me on Boxing Night. Certainly a Christmas Tree and a stocking full of presents appealed to that acquisitive instinct which is fully as strong in infancy as in old age; but, though exceedingly

young in my time, I never was young enough to be amused by a Snow-Man or dangerously excited by Blind Man's Buff. Looking back, like Tennyson's "many-wintered crow," on these Christmases of infancy, I have sometimes asked myself whether I lost much by my aloofness from the normal merriment of youth. Mr. Anstey Guthrie knows the secret heart of English boyhood more accurately than most of us, and when I read his description of a Christmas party I am inclined to be thankful that my lot was cast a good many miles beyond the cab-radius.

"Why couldn't you come to our party on Twelfth-night? We had great larks. I wish you'd been there."

"I had to go to young Skidmore's instead," said a pale, spiteful-looking boy with fair hair, carefully parted in the middle. "It was like his cheek to ask me, but I thought I'd go, you know, just to see what it was like."

"What was it like?" asked one or two near him, languidly.

"Oh, awfully slow! They've a poky little house in Brompton somewhere, and there was no dancing, only boshy games and a conjuror, without any presents. And, oh! I say, at supper there was a big cake on the table, and no one was allowed to cut it, because it was hired. They're so poor, you know. Skidmore's pater is only a clerk, and you should see his sisters!"

All my sympathies are with Skidmore, and I

think that the fair-haired boy was an unmitigated beast, and cad, and snob. But there is an awful verisimilitude about "Boshy Games and a Conjuror," and I bless the fate which allowed me to grow up in ignorance of Christmas Parties.

## XXXVII

### NEW YEAR'S DAY

ON the 1st of January 1882, Matthew Arnold wrote to his sister: "I think the beginning of a New Year very animating—it is so visible an occasion for breaking off bad habits and carrying into effect good resolutions." This was splendid in a man who had just entered his sixtieth year, and we all should like to share the sentiment; but it is not always easy to feel "animated," even by the most significant anniversaries. Sometimes they only depress; and the effect which they produce depends so very largely on the physical condition in which they find us. Suppose, for instance, that one is a fox-hunter, in the prime of life and the pride of health, with a good string of horses which have been eating their heads off during a prolonged frost. As one wakes on New Year's morning, one hears a delicious dripping from the roof, and one's servant, coming in with tea and letters, announces a rapid thaw. Then "the beginning of a New Year" is "animating" enough; and, while we wash and shave, we pledge ourselves, like Matthew



Arnold, to "break off bad habits and carry into effect good resolutions." We remember with shame that we missed three capital days' hunting last November because we let our friends seduce us to their shooting-parties; and we resolve this year to make up for lost time, to redeem wasted opportunities, and not willingly to lose a day between this and Christmas. Such resolutions are truly "animating"; but we cannot all be young or healthy or fox-hunters, and then the anniversary takes a different colour. Perhaps one is cowering over one's study-fire, with "an air of romance struggling through the commonplace effect of a swelled face" (like Miss Hucklebuckle in "The Owlet"), or mumbling the minced remains of our Christmas turkey as painfully as Father Diggory in "Ivanhoe," who was "so severely afflicted by toothache that he could only eat on one side of his face." Not for us, in such circumstances, are "animating" visions of wide pastures, and negotiable fences, and too-fresh hunters pulling one's arms off, and the chime of the "dappled darlings down the roaring blast." Rather does our New Year's fancy lightly turn to thoughts of dentistry and doctoring. We ask ourselves whether the time has not come when art must replace what nature has withdrawn; and, if we form a resolution, it is nothing more heroic than that we will henceforward wear goloshes in damp weather and a quilted overcoat in frost.

But, it may be urged, Matthew Arnold was not a fox-hunter (at least not after his Oxford days), and yet he contrived to feel "animated" by New Year's Day. In his case animation was connected with books.

"I am glad," he wrote, "to find that in the past year I have at least accomplished more than usual in the way of reading the books which at the beginning of the year I put down to be read. I always do this, and I do not expect to read all I put down, but sometimes I fall much too short of what I proposed, and this year things have been a good deal better. The importance of reading, not slight stuff to get through the time but the best that has been written, forces itself upon me more and more every year I live. It is living in good company, the best company, and people are generally quite keen enough, or too keen, about doing that; yet they will not do it in the simplest and most innocent manner by reading. If I live to be eighty, I shall probably be the only person left in England who reads anything but newspapers and scientific publications."

We have not quite come to that yet, but we are not far off it, and I should fear that the number of even educated people who occupy New Year's Day in laying down a course of serious study for the next twelve months is lamentably small. But Hunting and Health and Books are not the only topics for New Year's meditation. There is also

Money, which not seldom obtrudes itself with a disagreeable urgency. We cast our eye over that little parchment-bound volume which only "Fortune's favoured sons, not we" can regard with any complacency; and we observe, not for the first time, that we have been spending a good deal more than we ought to spend, and are not far from the perilous edge of an overdrawn account. This is "animating" indeed, but only as a sudden stab of neuralgia is animating; and we immediately begin to consider methods of relief. But where are our retrenchments to begin? That is always the difficulty. I remember that after the Cattle Plague of 1865, by which he had been a principal sufferer, the first Lord Tollemache was very full of fiscal reforms. "I ought to get rid of half my servants; but they are excellent people, and it would be very wrong to cause them inconvenience. Horses, too—I really have no right to keep a stud. But nothing would ever induce me to sell a horse, and it seems rather heartless to kill old friends. Then, again, about houses—I ought to leave St. James's Square, and take a house in Brompton. But the Brompton houses are so small that they really would not accommodate my family, and it would not be right to turn the boys into lodgings." And so on and so forth, with a magnificent list of contemplated reforms, which went unfulfilled till things had righted themselves and retrenchment was no longer necessary. In the same spirit, though on a very different scale, the inhabitants of Stuc-

covia contemplate the financial future which lies ahead of New Year's Day. We must economize—that is plain enough. But how are we to begin? I must have a new frock-coat very soon, and shall want at least three tweed suits before the autumn. Economy bids me desert Savile Row and try Aaronson in New Oxford Street. "Budge," says the Fiend. "Budge not," replies Self-Respect. Aaronson is remarkable for a fit "that never was on sea or land," and, though his garments are undeniably cheap, they are also nasty, and are worn out before they are paid for. Or perhaps our conscience pricks us most severely in the matter of wine. We will buy no more Pommery and Greno at 98s. a dozen, but will slake our modest thirst with a dry Sillery at 31s. But, after all, health is the first consideration in life, and, unfortunately, these cheap wines never agree with us. The doctor holds them directly responsible for our last attack of eczema or neuritis, and says impressively, "Drink good wine, or none at all—bad wine is poison to you." *Drink none at all.* That is very "animating," but somehow our enfeebled will is unequal to the required resolve; we hold spirit-drinking in detestation; and so, after all, we are driven back to our Pommery. "Surely," as Lamb said, "there must be some other world in which our unconquerable purpose" of retrenchment shall be realized.

Travel, again. Many people spend too much in travel. Can we curtail in that direction? For

my own part, I am a Londoner, and am content with life as it is afforded by this wonderful world miscalled a city. But the Family has claims. Some of them suffer from "Liver," and whoso knows what it is to dwell with liverish patients will not lightly run the risk of keeping them from Carlsbad. Others can only breathe on high Alps, and others, again, require the sunshine of the Riviera or the warmth of the Italian Lakes. So all the ways of retrenchment seem barred. Clothes and wine and travel must cost as much as they cost last year, and the only way of escape seems to lie in the steps of the Prince Consort, who, when Parliament reduced his income from the proposed fifty thousand a year to thirty, patiently observed that he should have to give less in subscriptions.

To the Spendthrift, or even to the more modest practitioner who merely lives up to his income, the New Year, as we have seen, offers few opportunities for resolutions of reform; but I fancy that the Skinflint, and his cousin the Screw, find it full of suggestive possibilities. I remember a gentleman of "griping and penurious tendencies" (the phrase is Mr. Gladstone's) telling me when I was a schoolboy that he had resolved to spend nothing with his tailor in the year then dawning. He announced it with the air befitting a great self-surrender, but I thought, as I looked at his clothes, that he was really only continuing the well-established practice of a lifetime. The Screw,

of course, is of no one place or age; and here is an excellent citation from the Diary of a Screw—Mr. Thomas Turner—who flourished in Sussex in the eighteenth century: "This being New Year's Day, myself and wife at church in the morning. Collection. My wife gave 6d. But, they not asking me, I gave nothing. Oh! may we increase in faith and good works, and maintain the good intentions we have this day taken up." Those who have tried it say that hoarding is the purest of human pleasures; and I dare say that by the end of the year good Mr. Turner's banking-book was a phantom of delight.

All these reflections, and others like unto them, came whirling on my mind this New Year's Eve; and, just as I was beginning to reduce them to form and figure, the shrill ting-ting of the church-bell pierced the silence of the night. *Watch-Night*. Those who are not the friends of the English Church denounce her as hidebound, immovable, and unreceptive. Here is the—or an—answer to the charge. She has borrowed, originally, from the Swedenborgians and more immediately from the Wesleyans, a religious observance which, though unrecognized in Prayer-book or Kalendar, now divides with the Harvest Festival the honour of being the most popular service in the Church of England.

"Among the promptings of what may be called, in the truest sense of the term, Natural Religion, none surely is more instructive than

that which leads men to observe with peculiar solemnity the entrance upon a new year of life. It is, if nothing else, the making a step in the dark. It is the entrance upon a new epoch in existence, of which the manifold "changes and chances" prevent our forecasting the issue. True, the line of demarcation is purely arbitrary; yet there are few, even of the most thoughtless, who can set foot across the line which separates one year from another without feeling in some degree the significance of the act. It would seem that this passing season of thoughtfulness was one of those opportunities which no form of religion could afford to miss. And yet, for a long time, that which may perhaps without offence be termed Ecclesiasticism sternly refused to recognize this occasion. The line was rigidly drawn between the Civil New Year and the Church's New Year. We were told that Advent was the beginning of our Sacred Year, and that the evening before the First Sunday in Advent was the time for those serious thoughts and good resolutions which rightly accompany a New Year."

Yes—so we were taught; and there was a great deal to be said, ecclesiastically, for the teaching. Only, unfortunately, no one believed it. We went to bed quite unmoved on Saturday evening, December 1, 1906. No era seemed to have closed for us, no era to have opened: there was nothing to remember, nothing to anticipate;

nothing to repent and nothing to resolve. It is otherwise to-night.<sup>1</sup> The "church-going bell" does not tingle in vain. Old men and maidens, young men and children are crowding in. I involve myself in an ulster and a comforter, and join the pilgrim-throng.

<sup>1</sup> December 31, 1906.



## XXXVIII

### PETS

MY suggestive friend has taken to postcards, and his style, never diffuse, has become as curt as that of Mr. Alfred Jingle. "Why not Pets?" he writes; and the suggestion gives pause.

When Mrs. Topham-Sawyer accepted the invitation to the Little Dinner at Timmins's, she concluded her letter to Rosa Timmins: "With a hundred kisses to your dear little *pet*." She said *pet*, we are told, "because she did not know whether Rosa's child was a girl or a boy; and Mrs. Timmins was very much pleased with the kind and gracious nature of the reply to her invitation." My mind misgave me that my friend might be using the word *pet* in the same sense as Mrs. Topham-Sawyer, and inviting me to a discussion of the Crêche or the Nursery. As my views of childhood are formed on those of Herod and Solomon, I hastened to decline so unsuitable a task, whereupon my friend, for all reply, sent me the following excerpt from an evening paper:—

"The Westminster Cat Exhibition, which will be held in the Royal Horticultural Society's Hall, Vincent Square, Westminster, on January 10 and

11, will afford an opportunity to all who love the domestic cat to aid in improving its lot through the agency of Our Dumb Friends' League, which it is desired to benefit, not only by their presence on the occasion, but by contributing suitable specimens to the 'Gift Class,' which will form part of the show, and be offered for sale in aid of the League during the time the exhibition is open. Children will be invited, for the first time, to enter into the competition with their pets for suitable prizes, and thus, it is hoped, increase their interest in and affection for domestic pets."

Here I felt myself on more familiar ground. For I, too, have been young. I have trafficked in squirrels and guinea-pigs, have invested my all in an Angora rabbit, and have undergone discipline for bringing a dormouse into school. These are, indeed, among the childish things which I put away when I became a Fifth Form boy; but their memory is sweet—sweeter, indeed, than was their actual presence. For the Cat, with which my friend seems chiefly to concern himself, I have never felt, or even professed, any warm regard. I leave her to Dick Whittington and Shakespeare, who did so much to popularize her; to Gray and Matthew Arnold and "C. S. C.," who have drawn her more sinister traits. Gray remarks, with reference to "the pensive Selima" and her hopeless struggles in the tub of goldfish, that "a favourite has no friend." Archbishop Benson rendered the line

"*Delicias dominæ cetera turba fugit.*"

I join the unfriendly throng, and pass to other themes.

The pet-keeping instinct, strong in infancy but suppressed by the iron traditions of the Public School, not seldom reasserts itself in the freedom of later life. "The Pets of History" would be a worthy theme for a Romanes Lecture at Oxford; and, if the purview were expanded so as to include the Pets of Literature, it would be a fit subject for the brilliant pen of Mr. Frederic Harrison. We might conveniently adopt a Wordsworthian classification, such as "Pets belonging to the period of Childhood," "Juvenile Pets," "Pets and the Affections," "Pets of the Fancy," and "Pets of the Imagination." In the last-named class a prominent place would be assigned to Heavenly Una's milk-white lamb and to Mary's snowy-fleeced follower. "Pets of the Fancy" has, I must confess, something of a pugilistic sound, but it might fairly be held to include the tame eagle which Louis Napoleon, when resident in Carlton Gardens, used to practise in the basement for the part which it was to play in his descent on Boulogne. Under "Pets and the Affections" we should recall Chaucer's "Prioress"—

"Of smale houndes hadde sche, that sche fedde  
With rostud fleissh, and mylk, and wastel bredde."

The Pets of Tradition would begin with St. John's tame partridge, and would include an account of St. Francis preaching to the birds. The

Pets of History would no doubt involve some reference to the Bruce's spider and Sir Isaac Newton's Diamond and the Duc D'Enghien's spaniel; and, if so belittling a title as "pet" may be applied to so majestic an animal as the horse, we should trace a long line of equine celebrities from Bucephalus and Sorrel to Marengo and Copenhagen. The Pets of Literature are, of course, a boundless host—chargers like White Surrey, and coursers like Roland; hounds like Keeldar and falcons like Cheviot—to say nothing of Mrs. Merdle's parrot, or Miss Tox's canary, or Mr. Kipling's appalling monkey, who murdered his owner's wife.

Wordsworth alone is responsible for a whole menagerie of pets—for a White Doe, for a greyhound called Dart, for "Prince," "Swallow," and "Little Music," let alone the anonymous dog who was lost with his master on Helvellyn. The gentle Cowper had his disgusting hares and his murderous spaniel Beau. Byron's only friend was a Newfoundland dog called Boatswain. The horses of fiction are a splendid stud. Ruksh leads the procession in poetry, and Rosinante in prose. A true lover of Scott can enumerate twenty different horses, of strongly marked individuality and appropriate names. Whoso knows not Widderin and his gallop from the bushrangers has yet to read one of the most thrilling scenes in fiction; and I think that to this imaginary stud may be fairly added the Arabian mare which Lord Beacons-

field thought he had ridden for thirty miles across country in the strongly-enclosed neighbourhood of Southend.

Among the Pets of Real Life an honourable place belongs to Sir Walter Scott's deerhounds—were not their names Bran and Maida?—and to Lord Shaftesbury's donkey Coster. Loved in life and honoured in death were Matthew Arnold's dachshunds Geist and Max, his retriever Rover, his cat Atossa, and, above all, his canary Matthias, commemorated in one of the most beautiful of elegiac poems. With Bismarck—not, one would have thought, a natural lover of pets—is historically associated a Boarhound, or "Great Dane." Lord Beaconsfield characteristically loved a peacock. The evening of Mr. Gladstone's days was cheered by the companionship of a small black Pomeranian. Sir Henry Hawkins was not better known to the criminal classes than his fox-terrier Jack; and all who passed Lady Burdett-Coutts's house saw hanging in the dining-room window a china cockatoo—the image or simulacrum of a departed bird which lived to a prodigious age and used to ask the most inconvenient questions.

The greatest patroness of Pets in Real Life was Queen Victoria, and her books have secured for these favourites a permanent place. Noble, the collie, will be remembered as long as "Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands" is read; and I can myself recall the excitement which fluttered the highest circles when a black

terrier, called, I think, Sharp, killed a rat which had climbed up the ivy into the window of the Queen's sitting-room at Windsor.

There are certain pets, or families of pets, which stand on their own traditional dignity rather than on associations with individuals. All Cheshire knows the Mastiffs of Lyme, tall as donkeys and peaceable as sheep. The Clumber Spaniels and the Gordon Setters are at least as famous as the dukes who own them. Perhaps the most fascinating pet in the canine world is associated with the great victory of Blenheim; and the Willoughby Pug preserves from oblivion a name which has been merged in the Earldom of Ancaster.

In the days of my youth one was constantly hearing—and especially in the Whiggish circles where I was reared—two names which may easily puzzle posterior critics. These were “Bear Ellis” and “Poodle Byng.” They were pre-eminently unsentimental persons. “Bear” Ellis (1781–1863) was so called because he was Chairman of the Hudson's Bay Company, and “Poodle” Byng (1784–1871) because his hair, while yet he boasted such an appendage, had been crisply curled. But the Dryasdust of the future, pondering over the social and political records of Queen Victoria's earlier reign, will undoubtedly connect these prefixes with pet-keeping tendencies, and will praise the humane influence of an animal-loving Court which induced hardened men of the world to join the ranks of “Our Dumb Friends' League.”

## XXXIX

### PURPLE AND FINE LINEN

DEAN *versus* Bishop—it is an antinomy as old as the history of Cathedral institutions. The Dean, with a good house and a thousand a year, has always murmured against the Bishop, with a better house and five times that income; and, as he is generally master of his Cathedral, he has before now contrived to make his murmurs sensible as well as audible. Of late years these spiritual strifes (which beautifully link the post-Reformation to the pre-Reformation Church) have been voted disedifying, and, if they continue to exist, they operate surreptitiously and out of public view. But, though Deans have ceased from clamouring, they retain their right to criticize, and the Dean of Norwich has just been exercising that right with a good deal of vivacity. I cull the following extract from a secular newspaper :—

#### SIMPLE LIFE FOR BISHOPS

“Dean Lefroy at a meeting of the General Diocesan Committee to make arrangements for the Church Congress at Great Yarmouth in

October . . . commented on the inordinate expense of founding bishoprics, and said that episcopacy in Canterbury Province cost £142,000 per annum, and in York £44,000. He believed that £2000 a year and a residence would be welcome to most bishops. The upkeep of large palaces swallowed up the bishops' incomes. Preserve the palaces, but give bishops the opportunity of living more simply. The surplus might go to poor and starving clergy."

One can picture the tempered gratitude with which the Bishops, and the ladies of the Episcopal household, and the Domestic Chaplains—those "amiable young gentlemen who make themselves agreeable in the drawing-rooms of the Mitre"—must regard this obliging invitation to "live more simply." There is a good deal of human nature even in apostolic bosoms, and a man who has enjoyed an official income of £5000 a year does not as a rule regard with enthusiasm a reduction to £2000. The Bishop in "Little Dorrit," when the guests at Mr. Merdle's banquet were extolling their host's opulence, "tried to look as if he was rather poor himself"; and his successors at the present day take great pains to assure the public that they are not overpaid. The *locus classicus* on the subject of episcopal incomes is to be found in the Rev. Hubert Handley's book called "The Fatal Opulence of Bishops," and was originally supplied by the artless candour of the present



Bishop of London, who in the year 1893 published in the *Oxford House Chronicle* a statistical statement by an unnamed Bishop. This prelate had only a beggarly income of £4200, and must therefore be the occupant of one of those comparatively cheap and humble Sees which the exigencies of the Church have lately called into being. Out of this pittance he had to pay £1950 for a removal, furniture, and repairs to the episcopal residence. This, to the lay mind, seems a good deal. Hospitality he sets down as costing £2000 a year; but somehow one feels as if one could give luncheon to the country clergy, and satisfy even the craving appetites of ordinands, at a less cost. "Stables," says the good Bishop, "are almost a necessity, and in some respects a saving;" but here the haughty disregard of details makes criticism difficult. "Robes, £100." This item is plain enough and absurd enough. The perverted ingenuity of fallen man has never devised a costume more hideous or less expressive than the episcopal "magpie"; and I am confident that Mrs. Bishop's maid could have stitched together the necessary amounts of lawn and black satin at a less cost than £100. But this exactly illustrates the plan on which these episcopal incomes are always defended by their apologists. We are told precisely what the Bishop expends on each item of charge. But we are not told, and are quite unable to divine, why each of those items should cost so much,

or why some of them should ever be incurred. The Bishop of London (then Mr. Winnington-Ingram) thus summed up the statement of his episcopal friend in the background: "It amounts to this—a bishop's income is a trust-fund for the diocese which head ministers. It would make no difference to him personally if three-quarters of it were taken away, so long as three-quarters of his liabilities were taken away too; and it is quite arguable that this would be a better arrangement."

Certainly it is "quite arguable"; but is it equally certain that the change "would make no difference to the Bishop personally"? I doubt it. Married men, men with large families and plenty of servants, naturally prefer large houses to small, provided that there is an income to maintain them. Men who enjoy the comforts and prettinesses of life prefer an income which enables them to repair and furnish and beautify their houses to an income which involves faded wall-paper and battered paint. Men of hospitable instincts are happier in a system which enables them to spend £2000 a year on entertaining than they would be if they were compelled to think twice of the butcher's bill and thrice of the wine-merchant's. Men who like horses—and few Englishmen do not—naturally incline to regard "stables as a necessity," and even as "in some respects"—what respects?—"a saving." If their income were reduced to the figure suggested by

Dean Lefroy, they would find themselves under the bitter constraint (as Milton calls it) of doing without a "necessity," and must even forgo an outlay which is "in some respects a saving."

Again, the anonymous Bishop returned his outlay in subscriptions at a fraction over £400 a year. I do not presume to say whether this is much or little out of an income of £4000. At any rate it is a Tithe, and that is a respectable proportion. But, supposing that our Bishop is a man of generous disposition, who loves to relieve distress and feels impelled to give a lift to every good cause which asks his aid, he is of necessity a happier man while he draws £4000 a year than he would be if cut down by reforming Deans to £2000.

I venture, then, with immense deference to that admirable divine who is now Bishop of London, to dissent emphatically from his judgment, recorded in 1895, that the diminution of episcopal incomes, if accompanied by a corresponding diminution of episcopal charges, would "make no difference to the Bishop personally." I conceive that it would make a great deal of difference, and that, though spiritually salutary, it would be, as regards temporal concerns, one of those experiments which one would rather try on one's neighbour than on oneself.

An ingenious clergyman who shared Dean Lefroy's and Mr. Handley's views on episcopal incomes, and had an inconvenient love of statistics,

made a study at the Probate Office of the personalty left by English Bishops who died between 1855 and 1885. The average was £54,000, and the total personalty something more than two millions sterling. "This was exclusive of any real estate they may have possessed, and exclusive of any sums invested in policies of life-assurance or otherwise settled for the benefit of their families." Myself no lover of statistics or of the extraordinarily ill-ventilated Will-room at Somerset House, I am unable to say how far the episcopal accumulations of the last twenty years may have affected the total and the average. It is only fair to remember that several of the Bishops who died between 1855 and 1885 dated from the happy days before the Ecclesiastical Commission curtailed episcopal incomes, and may have had ten, or fifteen, or twenty thousand a year. On the other hand, it is to be borne in mind that, since Sir William Harcourt's Budget, the habit of "dodging the death-duties" has enormously increased, and has made it difficult to know what a testator, episcopal or other, really possessed. But it is scarcely possible to doubt that, if the public were permitted to examine all the episcopal pass-books, we should find that, in spite of the exactions of upholsterers and furniture-removers, butchers and bakers, robe-makers and horse-dealers, the pecuniary lot of an English Bishop is, to borrow a phrase of Miss Edgeworth's, "vastly put-up-able with."

Just after Mr. Bright had been admitted to the Cabinet, and when the more timid and more plausible members of his party hoped that he would begin to curb his adventurous tongue, he attended a banquet of the Fishmongers' Company at which the Archbishops and Bishops were entertained. The Archbishop of York (Dr. Thomson) said in an after-dinner speech that the Bishops were the most liberal element in the House of Lords, seeing that they were the only peers created for life. This statement Mr. Bright, speaking later in the evening, characterized as an excess of hilarity; "though," he added, "it is possible that, with a Bishop's income, I might have been as merry as any of them, with an inexhaustible source of rejoicing in the generosity, if not in the credulity, of my countrymen." To this outrageous sally the assembled prelates could, of course, only reply by looking as dignified (and as poor) as they could; and no doubt the general opinion of the Episcopal Bench is that they are an overworked and ill-remunerated set of men.

Yet there have been Apostles, and successors of the Apostles, who worked quite as hard and were paid considerably less, and yet succeeded in winning and retaining the affectionate reverence of their own and of succeeding generations. Bishop Wilson of Sodor and Man lived, we are told, on an income which "did not exceed £300 a year." By far the most dignified ecclesiastic with whom I was ever brought in contact—a

true "Prince of the Church" if ever there was one—was Cardinal Manning, and his official income was bounded by a figure which even the reforming spirit of Dean Lefroy would reject as miserably insufficient. "It is pleasant," wrote Sydney Smith, "to loll and roll and accumulate—to be a purple-and-fine-linen man, and to be called by some of those nicknames which frail and ephemeral beings are so fond of heaping upon each other,—but the best thing of all is to live like honest men, and to add something to the cause of liberality, justice, and truth." It is no longer easy for a Bishop to "loll and roll"—the bicycle and the motor-car are enemies to tranquil ease—and, if Dean Lefroy's precept and Bishop Gore's example are heeded, he will find it equally difficult to "accumulate."

## XL

### PRELACY AND PALACES

THAT delicious prelate whom I have already quoted, but whose name and See are unkindly withheld from us by the Bishop of London, thus justified his expenditure on hospitality: "*Palace*, I am told, is from *Palatium*, 'the open house,' and there is almost daily entertainment of clergy and laity from a distance." I will not presume to question the episcopal etymology; for, whether it be sound or unsound, the practical result is equally good. We have apostolic authority for holding that Bishops should be given to hospitality, and it is satisfactory to know that the travel-worn clergy and laity of the anonymous diocese are not sent empty away. But would not the boiled beef and rice pudding be equally acceptable and equally sustaining if eaten in some apartment less majestic than the banqueting-hall of a Palace? Would not the Ecclesiastical Commissioners be doing a good stroke of business for the Church if they sold every Episcopal Palace in England and provided the evicted Bishops with moderate-sized and commodious houses?

These are questions which often present them-

selves to the lay mind, and the answer usually returned to them involves some very circuitous reasoning. The Bishops, say their henchmen, must have large incomes because they have to live in Palaces; and they must live in Palaces—I hardly know why, but apparently because they have large incomes. Such reasoning does not always convince the reformer's mind, though it is repeated in each succeeding generation with apparent confidence in its validity. After all, there is nothing very revolutionary in the suggestion that Episcopal palaces should be, in the strictest sense of the word, confiscated. Sixty-four years ago Dr. Hook, who was not exactly an iconoclast, wrote thus to his friend Samuel Wilberforce: "I really do not see how the Church can fairly ask the State to give it money for the purpose of giving a Church education, when the money is to be supplied by Dissenters and infidels and all classes of the people, who, according to the principles of the Constitution, have a right to control the expenditure. The State can only, if consistent, give an infidel education; it cannot employ public money to give a Church education, because of the Dissenters; nor a Protestant education, because of the Papists; and have not Jews, Turks, and infidels as much a right as heretics to demand that the education should not be Christian?" This strikes me as very wholesome doctrine, and, though enounced in 1843, necessary for these times. And, when he turns to ways and means,



Dr. Hook is equally explicit: "If we are to educate the people in Church principles, the education must be out of Church funds. We want not proud Lords, haughty Spiritual Peers, to be our Bishops. Offer four thousand out of their five thousand a year for the education of the people. Let Farnham Castle and Winchester House and Ripon Palace be sold, and we shall have funds to establish other Bishoprics. . . . You see I am almost a Radical, for I do not see why our Bishops should not become as poor as Ambrose or Augustine, that they may make the people really rich." It is not surprising that Samuel Wilberforce, who had already climbed up several rungs of the ladder of promotion, and as he himself tells us, "had often talked" of further elevation, met Dr. Hook's suggestions with solemn repudiation. "I *do* think that we want Spiritual Peers." "I see no reason why the Bishops' Palaces should be sold, which would not apply equally to the halls of our squires and the palaces of our princes." "To impoverish our Bishops and sell their Palaces would only be the hopeless career of revolution."

The real reason for selling the Episcopal Palaces is that, in plain terms, they are too big and too costly for their present uses. They afford a plausible excuse for paying the Bishops more highly than they ought to be paid; and yet the Bishops turn round and say that even the comfortable incomes which the Ecclesiastical Com-

mission has assigned them are unequal to the burden of maintaining the Palaces. The late Bishop Thorold, who was both a wealthy and a liberal man, thus bemoaned his hard fate in having to live at Farnham Castle: "It will give some idea of what the furnishing of this house from top to bottom meant if I mention that the stairs, with the felt beneath, took just a mile and 100 yards of carpet, with 260 brass stair-rods; and that, independently of the carpet in the great hall, the carpets used elsewhere absorbed 1414 yards—a good deal over three-quarters of a mile. As to the entire amount of roof, which in an old house requires constant watching, independently of other parts of the building, it is found to be, on measurement, 32,000 superficial feet, or one acre and one-fifth." What is true of Farnham is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of Bishopthorpe with its hundred rooms, and Auckland Castle with its park, and Rose Castle with its woodlands, and Lambeth with its tower and guard-room and galleries and gardens. Even the smaller Palaces, such as the "Moated Grange" of Wells, are not maintained for nothing. "My income goes in pelargoniums," growled Bishop Stubbs, as he surveyed the conservatories of Cuddesdon. "It takes ten chaps to keep this place in order," ejaculated a younger prelate as he skipped across his tennis-ground.

Of course the root of the mischief is that these Palaces were built and enlarged in the days when

each See had its own income, and when the incomes of such Sees as Durham and Winchester ran to twenty or thirty thousand a year. The poor Sees—and some were very poor—had Palaces proportioned to their incomes, and very unpalatial they were. “But now,” as Bertie Stanhope said to the Bishop of Barchester at Mrs. Proudie’s evening party, “they’ve cut them all down to pretty nearly the same figure,” and such buildings as suitably accommodated the princely retinues of Archbishop Harcourt (who kept one valet on purpose to dress his wigs) and Bishop Sumner (who never went from Farnham Castle to the Parish Church except in a coach-and-four) are “a world too wide for the shrunk shanks” of their present occupants.

In the Palace of Ely there is a magnificent gallery, which once was the scene of a memorable entertainment. When Bishop Sparke secured a Residentiary Canonry of Ely for his eldest son, the event was so completely in the ordinary course of things that it passed without special notice. But, when he planted his second son in a second Canonry, he was, and rightly, so elated by the achievement that he entertained the whole county of Cambridge at a ball in his gallery. But in those days Ely was worth £11,000 a year, and we are not likely to see a similar festival. Until recent years the Archbishop of Canterbury had a suburban retreat from the cares of Lambeth, at Addington, near Croydon, where one of the ugliest mansions

in Christendom stood in one of the prettiest parks. Archbishop Temple, who was a genuine reformer, determined to get rid of this second Palace and take a modest house near his Cathedral. When he asked the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to sanction this arrangement, they demurred. "Do you think," they asked, "that your successors will wish to live at Canterbury?" "No, *I don't*," replied the Archbishop, with indescribable emphasis, "*and so I'm determined they shall.*"

If every Bishop who is saddled with an inconveniently large house were in earnest about getting rid of it, the Ecclesiastical Commission could soon help him out of his difficulty. Palaces of no architectural or historical interest could be thrown into the market, and follow the fate of Riseholme, once the abode of the Bishops of Lincoln. Those Palaces which are interesting or beautiful, or in any special sense heirlooms of the Church, could be converted into Diocesan Colleges, Training Colleges, Homes for Invalid Clergymen, or Houses of Rest for such as are overworked and broken down. By this arrangement the Church would be no loser, and the Bishops, according to their own showing, would be greatly the gainers. £5000 a year, or even a beggarly four, will go a long way in a villa at Edgbaston or a red-brick house in Kennington Park; and, as the Bishops will no longer have Palaces to maintain, they will no doubt gladly accept still further reductions at the hands of reformers like Dean Lefroy.

It would be a sad pity if these contemplated reductions closed the *Palatium* or "open house" against the hungry flock; but, if they only check the more mundane proclivities of Prelacy, no harm will be done. One of the most splendidly hospitable prelates who ever adorned the Bench was Archbishop Thomson of York, and this is Bishop Wilberforce's comment on what he saw and heard under the Archiepiscopal roof: "Dinner at Archbishop of York's. A good many Bishops, both of England and Ireland, and not one word said which *implied* we were apostles." Perhaps it will be easier to keep that fact in remembrance, when to apostolic succession is added the grace of apostolic poverty.

## XLI

### HORRORS

THE subject is suggested to me by the notice-board outside the Court Theatre. There I learn that "The Campden Wonder" has run its course. A "horror" of the highest excellence has been on view for four weeks; and I, who might have revelled in it, have made, *per viltate*, the Great Refusal. I leave the italicized quality untranslated, because I am not quite sure of the English equivalent which would exactly suit my case. "Vileness" is a little crude. "Cowardice" is ignominious. "Poorness of Spirit" is an Evangelical virtue. "Deficiency of Enterprise" and "an impaired nervous system" would, at the best, be paraphrases rather than translations. On the whole, I think the nearest approximation to the facts of my case is to say that my refusal to profit by Mr. Masefield's Horror was due to Decadence. *Fuimus*. There has been a period when such a tale as the "Campden Wonder" would have attracted me with an irresistible fascination and gripped me with a grasp of iron. But I am not the man I was; and I am beginning to share the apprehensions of the aged lady who told her

doctor that she feared she was breaking up, for she could no longer relish her Murders.

Youth, and early youth, is indeed the Golden Age of Horrors. To a well-constituted child battle and murder and sudden death appeal far more powerfully than any smooth tale of love. We snatch a fearful joy from the lurid conversation of servants and neighbours. We gaze, with a kind of panic-stricken rapture, at the stain on the floor which marks the place where old Mr. Yellowboy was murdered for his money; and run very fast, though with a backward gaze, past the tree on which young Rantipole hanged himself on being cut off with a shilling by his uncle Mr. Wormwood Scrubbs. In some privileged families the children are not left to depend on circumjacent gossip, but are dogmatically instructed in hereditary horrors. This happy lot was mine. My father's uncle had been murdered by his valet; and from a very tender age I could have pointed out the house where the murder took place—it went cheap for a good many years afterwards,—and could have described the murderer stripping himself naked before he performed the horrid act, and the bath of blood in which the victim was found, and the devices employed to create an impression of suicide instead of murder. I could have repeated the magnificent peroration in which the murderer's advocate exhorted the jury to spare his client's life (and which, forty years later, was boldly

plagiarized by Mr. Montagu Williams in defending Dr. Lamson). The murderer, Benjamin Francis Courvoisier by name, long occupied a conspicuous place in Madame Tussaud's admirable collection. I can distinctly recall a kind of social eminence among my schoolfellows which was conferred by the fact that I had this relationship with the Chamber of Horrors; and I was conscious of a painful descent when Courvoisier lapsed out of date and was boiled down into Mr. Cobden or Cardinal Wiseman or some other more recent celebrity. Then, again, all literature was full of Horrors; and, though we should have been deprived of jam at tea if we had been caught reading a Murder Trial in the *Daily Telegraph*, we were encouraged to drink our fill of Shakespeare and Scott and Dickens and other great masters of the Horrible. From De Quincey we learned that Murder may be regarded as a Fine Art, and from an anonymous poet we acquired the immortal verse which narrates the latter end of Mr. William Weare. Shakespeare, as his French critics often remind us, reeks of blood and slaughter; the word "Murder" and its derivatives occupy two columns of Mrs. Cowden Clarke's closely-printed pages. Scott's absolute mastery over his art is nowhere more strikingly exemplified than in his use of murderous mechanisms. "The Heart of Midlothian" begins, continues, and ends with murder. "Rob Roy" contains a murder-scene of lurid beauty. The murderous attack on



the bridegroom in "The Bride of Lammermoor" is a haunting horror. Not all the Dryasdusts in England and Germany combined will ever displace the tradition of Amy Robsart and the concealed trap-door. Front-de-Bœuf's dying agony is to this hour a glimpse of hell. Greatest of the great in humour, Dickens fell not far behind the greatest when he turned his hand to Horrors. One sheds few tears for Mr. Tulkinghorn, and we consign Jonas Chuzzlewit to the gallows without a pang. But is there in fiction a more thrilling scene than the arrest of the murderer on the moonlit tower-stair in "Barnaby Rudge," or the grim escape of Sikes from the vengeance of the mob in "Oliver Twist"? For deliberate, minute, and elaborated horror commend me to the scene at the limekiln on the marshes where Pip awaits his horrible fate at the hands of the crazy savage Dolge Orlick.

But it was not only the great masters of fiction who supplied us with our luxuries of horror. The picture of the young man who had murdered his brother, hanging on a gibbet in Blackgrove Wood, is painted with a gruesome fidelity of detail which places Mrs. Sherwood high among literary artists; and the incidents connected with the death of Old Prue would entitle Mrs. Beecher Stowe to claim kinship with Zola.

It is curious to reflect that Miss Braddon, the most cheerful and wholesome-minded of

all living novelists, first won her fame by imagining the murderous possibilities of a well, and established it by that unrivalled mystification which confounds the murderer and the murdered in "Henry Dunbar." Nor will the younger generation of authoresses consent to be left behind in the race of Horrors. In old days we were well satisfied if we duly worked up to our predestined murder just before the end of the third volume. To-day Lady Ridley gives us, in the first chapter of "A Daughter of Jael," one of the most delicate and suggestive pieces of murder-writing which I, a confirmed lover of the horrible, can call to mind.

To a soul early saturated with literary horrors the experience of life is a curious translation of fancy into fact. Incidents which have hitherto appeared visionary and imaginative now take the character of substantial reality. We discover that horrors are not confined to books or to a picturesque past, but are going on all round us; and the discovery is fraught with an uneasy joy. When I recall the illusions of my infancy and the facts which displaced them, I feel that I fall miserably below the ideal of childhood presented in the famous "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality." My "daily travel further from the East" is marked by memories of dreadful deeds, and the "vision splendid" which attends me on my way is a vivid succession of peculiarly startling murders. In the dawn of consciousness

these visions have "something of celestial light" about them—they are spiritual, impalpable, ideal. At length the youth perceives them die away, "and melt into the light of common day"—very common day indeed, the day of the Old Bailey and the *Police News*. By a curious chain of coincidences, I was early made acquainted with the history of that unfriendly Friend John Tawell, who murdered his sweetheart with prussic acid, and was the first criminal to be arrested by means of the electric telegraph. Heroic was the defence set up by Sir Fitzroy Kelly, who tried to prove that an inordinate love of eating apples, pips and all, accounted for the amount of prussic acid found in the victim's body. Kelly lived to be Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, but the professional nickname of "Apple-pip Kelly" stuck to him to the end. I know the house where Tawell lived; I have sat under the apple-tree of which his victim ate; and I have stood, the centre of a roaring election crowd, on the exact spot outside the Court-house at Aylesbury where he expiated his crime.

Tawell belongs, if I may so say, to a pre-natal impression. But, as the 'sixties of the last century unroll their record, each page displays its peculiar Horror. In 1860 Constance Kent cut her little brother's throat, and buried him in the back-yard. Many a night have I lain quaking in my bed, haunted by visions of sisters armed with razors, and hurried graves in secret spots. Not much

more cheering was the nocturnal vision of Thomas Hopley, schoolmaster, of Eastbourne, convicted in 1860 of flogging a half-witted pupil to death with a skipping-rope, and afterwards covering the lacerated hands with white kid gloves. I confess to a lasting distaste for private schools, founded on this reminiscence. "The Flowery Land" is a title so prettily fanciful, so suffused with the glamour of the East, that one would scarcely expect to connect it with piracy, murder, and a five-fold execution. Yet that is what it meant for youthful horror-mongers in 1864. In 1865 the plan which pleased my childish thought was that pursued by Dr. Pritchard of Glasgow, who, while he was slowly poisoning his wife and his mother-in-law, kept a diary of their sufferings and recorded their deliverance from the burden of the flesh with pious unction. Two years later a young ruffian, whose crime inspired Mr. James Rhoades to write a passionate poem, cut a child into segments, and recorded in his journal—"Saturday, August 24, 1867: Killed a young girl; it was fine and hot."

One might linger long in these paths of dalliance, but space forbids; and memory clears nine years at a bound. Most vivid, most fascinating, most human, if such an epithet be permitted in such a context, was the "Balham Mystery" of 1876. Still I can feel the cob bolting with me across Tooting Common; still I lave my stiffness in a hot bath, and tell the butler that it will do for

a cold bath to-morrow ; still I plunge my carving-knife into the loin of lamb, and fill up the chinks with that spinach and those eggs ; still I quench my thirst with that Burgundy, of *which no drop remained in the decanter* ; and still I wake up in the middle of the night to find myself dying in torture by antimonial poisoning.

But we have supped full on horrors. Good night, and pleasant dreams.

## XLII

### SOCIAL CHANGES

I HAVE been invited to make some comments on recent changes in society, and I obey the call, though not without misgiving. "Society" in its modern extension is so wide a subject that probably no one can survey more than a limited portion of its area; and, if one generalizes too freely from one's own experience, one is likely to provoke the contradictions of critics who, surveying other portions, have been impressed by different, and perhaps contrary, phenomena. All such contradictions I discount in advance. After all, one can only describe what one has seen, and my equipment for the task entrusted to me consists of nothing more than a habit of observation and a retentive memory.

I was brought up in that "sacred circle of the Great-Grandmotherhood" of which Mr. Beresford-Hope made such excellent fun in "Strictly Tied Up." As Mr. Squeers considered himself the "right shop for morals," so the Whigs considered themselves the right shop for manners. What they said and did every one ought to say and

do, and from their judgment there was no appeal. A social education of this kind leaves traces which time is powerless to efface—" *Vieille école, bonne école, begad!*" as Major Pendennis said. In twenty-five years' contact with a more enlarged society, one has found a perpetual interest in watching the departure, gradual but nearly universal, from the social traditions of one's youth. The contrast between Now and Then is constantly reasserting itself; and, if I note some instances of it just as they occur to my mind, I shall be doing, at any rate in part, what has been required of me.

I will take the most insignificant instances first—instances of phrase and diction and pronunciation. I am just old enough to remember a great-grandmother who said that she "lay" at a place when she meant that she had slept there, and spoke of "using the potticary" when we should speak of sending for the doctor. Some relations of a later generation said "ooman" for woman, and, when they were much obliged, said they were much "obleeged." "Brarcelet" for bracelet and "di'monds" for diamonds were common pronunciations. Tuesday was "Toosday," and first was "fust." Chariot was "charr'ot," and Harriet "Harr'yet," and I have even heard "Jeames" for James. "Goold" for gold and "yaller" for yellow were common enough. Stirrups were always called "sturrups," and squirrels "squrells," and wrapped was pronounced "wropped," and tassels

“tossels,” and Gertrude “Jertrude.” A lilac was always called a “laylock,” and a cucumber a “cowcumber.” The stress was laid on the second syllable of balcony, even as it is written in the “Diverting History of John Gilpin” :—

“ At Edmonton his loving wife  
 From the balcony spied  
 Her tender husband, wondering much  
 To see how he did ride.”

*N.B.*—Cowper was a Whig.

Of course, these archaisms were already passing away when I began to notice them, but some of them survive until this hour, and only last winter, after an evening service in St. Paul’s Cathedral, I was delighted to hear a lady, admiring the illuminated dome, exclaim, “How well the doom looks !”

Then, again, as regards the names of places. I cannot profess to have heard “Lunnon,” but I have heard the headquarters of my family called “’Ooburn,” and Rome “Roome,” and Sèvres “Saver,” and Falmouth “Farmouth,” and Penrith “Peerith,” and Cirencester “Ciciter.”

Nowadays it is as much as one can do to get a cabman to take one to Berwick Street or Berkeley Square, unless one calls them Ber-wick or Burkley. Gower Street and Pall Mall are pronounced as they are spelt ; and, if one wants a ticket for Derby, the booking-clerk obligingly corrects one’s request to “Durby.”



And, as with pronunciation, so also with phrase and diction—

“Change and decay in all around I see.”

When I was young the word “lunch,” whether substantive or verb, was regarded with a peculiar horror, and ranked with “bus” in the lowest depths of vulgarity. To “take” in the sense of eat or drink was another abomination which lay too deep for words. “You take exercise or take physic; nothing else,” said Brummel to the lady who asked him to take tea. “I beg your pardon, you also take a liberty,” was the just rejoinder.

I well remember that, when the journals of an Illustrious Person were published and it appeared that a royal party had “taken luncheon” on a hill, it was stoutly contended in Whig circles that the servants had taken the luncheon to the hill where their masters ate it; and, when a close examination of the text proved this gloss to be impossible, it was decided that the original must have been written in German, and that it had been translated by some one who did not know the English idiom. To “ride,” meaning to travel in a carriage, was, and I hope still is, regarded as the peculiar property of my friend Pennialinus;<sup>1</sup> and I remember the mild sensation caused in a Whig house when a neighbour who had driven over to luncheon declined to wash her hands on the ground that she had “ridden in gloves.” The vehicle which was invented by a

<sup>1</sup> A character invented by Mr. William Cory.

Lord Chancellor and called after his name was scrupulously pronounced so as to rhyme with groom, and any one indiscreet enough to say that he had ridden in "the Row" would probably have been asked if he had gone round by "the Zoo."

"Cherry pie and apple pie; all the rest are tarts," was an axiom carefully instilled into the young gastronomer; while "to pass" the mustard was bound in the same bundle of abominations as "I'll trouble you," "May I assist you?" "Not any, thank you," and "A very small piece."

Then, again, as to what may be called the Manners of Eating. A man who put his elbows on the table would have been considered a Yahoo, and he who should eat his asparagus with a knife and fork would have been classed with the traditional collier who boiled his pineapple. Fish-knives (like oxidized silver biscuit-boxes) were unknown and undreamt-of horrors. To eat one's fish with two forks was the *cachet* of a certain circle, and the manner of manipulating the stones of a cherry pie was the *articulus stantis vel cadentis*. The little daughter of a great Whig house, whose eating habits had been contracted in the nursery, once asked her mother with wistful longing, "Mamma, when shall I be old enough to eat bread and cheese with a knife, and put the knife in my mouth?" and she was promptly informed that not if she lived to attain the age of Methuselah would she be able to acquire that "unchartered freedom." On the other hand, old gentlemen

of the very highest breeding used after dinner to rinse their mouths in their finger-glasses, and thereby caused unspeakable qualms in unaccustomed guests. In that respect at any rate, if in no other, the most inveterate praiser of times past must admit that alteration has not been deterioration.

Another marked change in society is the diminution of stateliness. A really well-turned-out carriage, with a coachman in a wig and two powdered footmen behind, is as rare an object in the Mall as a hansom in Bermondsey or a tandem in Bethnal Green. Men go to the levée in cabs or on motor-cars, and send their wives to the Palace Ball in the products of the Coupé Company. The Dowager Duchess of Cleveland (1792-1883) once told me that Lord Salisbury had no carriage. On my expressing innocent surprise, she said, "I have been told that Lord Salisbury goes about London in a brougham;" and her tone could not have expressed a more lively horror if the vehicle had been a coster's barrow. People of a less remote date than the Duchess's had become inured to barouches for ladies and broughams for men, but a landau was contemned under the derogatory nickname of a "demi-fortune," and the spectacle of a great man scaling the dizzy heights of the 'bus or plunging into the depths of the Twopenny Tube would have given rise to lively comment.

A pillar of the Tory party, who died not twenty years ago, finding his newly-married wife poking

the fire, took the poker from her hands and said with majestic pain, "My dear, will you kindly remember that you are now a countess?" A Liberal statesman, still living, when he went to Harrow for the first time, sailed up the Hill in the family coach, and tradition does not report that his schoolfellows kicked him with any special virulence.

I have known people who in travelling would take the whole of a first-class carriage sooner than risk the intrusion of an unknown fellow-passenger: their descendants would as likely as not reach their destination on motor-cars, having pulled up at some wayside inn for mutton chops and whisky-and-soda.

## XLIII

### SOCIAL GRACES

THOUGH stateliness has palpably diminished, the beauty of life has as palpably increased. In old days people loved, or professed to love, fine pictures, and those who had them made much of them. But with that one exception no one made any attempt to surround himself with beautiful objects. People who happened to have fine furniture used it because they had it; unless, indeed, the desire to keep pace with the fashion induced them to part with Louis Seize or Chippendale and replace it by the austere productions of Tottenham Court Road. The idea of buying a chimneypiece or a cabinet or a bureau because it was beautiful never crossed the ordinary mind. The finest old English china was habitually used, and not seldom smashed, in the housekeeper's room. It was the age of horse-hair and mahogany, and crimson flock papers and green rep curtains. Whatever ornaments the house happened to possess were clustered together on a round table in the middle of the drawing-room. The style has been immortalized by the hand of a master: "There were no skilfully contrasted shades of grey or green, no dado,

no distemper. The woodwork was grained and varnished after the manner of the Philistines, the walls papered in dark crimson, with heavy curtains of the same colour, and the sideboard, dinner-waggon, and row of stiff chairs were all carved in the same massive and expensive style of ugliness. The pictures were those familiar presentments of dirty rabbits, fat white horses, bloated goddesses, and misshapen boors by masters, who if younger than they assumed to be, must have been quite old enough to know better." A man who hung a blue-and-white plate on a wall, or put peacocks' feathers in a vase, would have been regarded as insane; and I well remember the outcry of indignation and scorn when a well-known collector of bric-a-brac had himself painted with a pet teapot in his hands.

In this respect the change is complete. The owners of fine picture-galleries no longer monopolize "art in the home." People who cannot afford old masters invoke the genius of Mr. Mortimer Menpes. If they have not inherited French furniture they buy it, or at least imitations of the real, which are quite as beautiful. A sage-green wash on the wall, and a white dado to the height of a man's shoulder, cover a multitude of paper-hanger's sins. The commonest china is pretty in form and colour. A couple of rugs from Liberty's replace the hideous and costly carpets which lasted their unfortunate possessors a lifetime; and, whereas in those distant days one never saw a flower on a dinner-table, now "it is roses, roses all the way,"

or, when it cannot be roses, it is daffodils and tulips and poppies and chrysanthemums.

All this is the work of the despised æsthetes ; but this generation will probably see no meaning in the great drama of "Patience," and has no conception of the tyrannous ugliness from which Bunthorne and his friends delivered us. Their double achievement was to make ugliness culpable, and to prove that beauty need not be expensive.

The same change may be observed in everything connected with Dinner. No longer is the mind oppressed by those monstrous hecatombs under which, as Bret Harte said, "the table groaned and even the sideboard sighed." Frascatelli's monstrous bills of fare, with six "side dishes" and four sweets, survive only as monuments of what our fathers could do. Racing plate and "epergnes," with silver goddesses and sphinxes and rams' horns, if not discreetly exchanged for prettier substitutes, hide their diminished heads in pantries and safes. Instead of these horrors, we have bright flowers and shaded lights ; and a very few, perhaps too few, dishes, which both look pretty and taste good. Here, again, expensive ugliness has been routed, and inexpensive beauty enthroned in its place.

The same law, I believe, holds good about dress. With the mysteries of woman's clothes I do not presume to meddle. I do not attempt to estimate the relative cost of the satins and ermine and scarves which Lawrence painted, and the "duck's-egg bolero" and "mauve hopsack" which I have

lately seen advertized in the list of a winter sale. But about men's dress I feel more confident. The "rich cut Genoa velvet waistcoat," the solemn frock coat, the satin stock, and the trousers strapped under the wellingtons, were certainly hideous, and I shrewdly suspect that they were vastly more expensive than the blue serge suits, straw hats, brown boots, and sailor-knot ties in which the men of the present day contrive to look smart without being stiff.

When Mr. Gladstone in old age revisited Oxford and lectured on Homer to a great gathering of undergraduates, he was asked if he saw any difference between his hearers and the men of his own time. He responded briskly, "Yes, in their dress, an enormous difference. I am told that I had among my audience some of the most highly-connected and richest men in the university, and there wasn't one whom I couldn't have dressed from top to toe for £5."

I have spoken so far of material beauty, and here the change in society has been an inexpressible improvement; but, when I turn to beauty of another kind, I cannot speak with equal certainty. Have our manners improved? Beyond all question they have changed, but have they changed for the better?

It may seem incongruous to cite Dr. Pusey as an authority on anything more mundane than a hair-shirt, yet he was really a close observer of social phenomena, as his famous sermon on Dives and



Lazarus, with its strictures on the modern Dives's dinner and Mrs. Dives's ball-gown, sufficiently testifies. He was born a Bouverie in 1800, when the Bouveries still were Whigs, and he testified in old age to "the beauty of the refined worldly manners of the old school," which, as he insisted, were really Christian in their regard for the feelings of others. "If in any case they became soulless as apart from Christianity, the beautiful form was there into which real life might re-enter."

We do not, I think, see much of the "beautiful form" nowadays. Men when talking to women lounge, and sprawl, and cross their legs, and keep one hand in a pocket while they shake hands with the other, and shove their partners about in the "Washington Post," and wallow in the Kitchen-Lancers. All this is as little beautiful as can be conceived. Grace and dignity have perished side by side. And yet, oddly enough, the people who are most thoroughly bereft of manners seem bent on displaying their deficiencies in the most conspicuous places. In the old days it would have been thought the very height of vulgarity to run after royalty. The Duke of Wellington said to Charles Greville, "When we meet the Royal Family in society they are our superiors, and we owe them all respect." That was just all. If a Royal Personage knew you sufficiently well to pay you a visit, it was an honour, and all suitable preparations were made. "My father walked backwards with a silver candlestick, and red baize awaited the royal feet."

If you encountered a prince or princess in society, you made your bow and thought no more about it. An old-fashioned father, who had taken a schoolboy son to call on a great lady, said, "Your bow was too low. That is the sort of bow we keep for the Royal Family." There was neither drop-down-dead-ateness, nor pushfulness, nor familiarity. Well-bred people knew how to behave themselves, and there was an end of the matter. But to force one's self on the notice of royalty, to intrigue for visits from Illustrious Personages, to go out of one's way to meet princes or princesses, to parade before the gaping world the amount of intimacy with which one had been honoured, would have been regarded as the very madness of vulgarity.

Another respect in which modern manners compare unfavourably with ancient is the growing love of titles. In old days people thought a great deal, perhaps too much, of Family. They had a strong sense of territorial position, and I have heard people say of others, "Oh, they are cousins of ours," as if that fact put them within a sacred and inviolable enclosure. But titles were contemned. If you were a peer, you sate in the House of Lords instead of the House of Commons ; and that was all. No one dreamed of babbling about "peers" as a separate order of creation, still less of enumerating the peers to whom they were related.

A member of the Tory Government was once at pains to explain to an entirely unsympathetic audience that the only reason why he and Lord

Curzon had not taken as good a degree as Mr. Asquith was that, being the eldest sons of peers, they were more freely invited into the County society of Oxfordshire. I can safely say that, in the sacred circle of the Great-Grandmotherhood, that theory of academical shortcoming would not have been advanced.

The idea of buying a baronetcy would have been thought simply droll, and knighthood was regarded as the guerdon of the successful grocer. I believe that in their inmost hearts the Whigs enjoyed the Garters which were so freely bestowed on them; but they compounded for that human weakness by unmeasured contempt for the Bath, and I doubt if they had ever heard of the Star of India. To state this case is sufficiently to illustrate a conspicuous change in the sentiment of society.

## XLIV

### PUBLICITY *V.* RETICENCE

THE great people of old time followed (quite unconsciously) the philosopher who bade man "hide his life." Of course, the stage of politics was always a pillory, and he who ventured to stand on it made up his mind to encounter a vast variety of popular missiles. "In my situation as Chancellor of the University of Oxford," said the Duke of Wellington, "I have been much exposed to authors;" and men whom choice or circumstances forced into politics were exposed to worse annoyances than "authors." But the line was rigidly drawn between public and private life. What went on in the home was sacredly secreted from the public gaze. People lived among their relations and friends and political associates, and kept the gaping world at a distance. Now we worship Publicity as the chief enjoyment of human life. We send lists of our shooting-parties to "Society Journals." We welcome the Interviewer. We contribute personal paragraphs to *Classy Cuttings*. We admit the photographer to our bedrooms, and give our portraits to illustrated papers. We take our exercise when we have the best

chance of being seen and noticed, and we never eat our dinner with such keen appetites as amid the half-world of a Piccadilly restaurant. In brief, "Expose thy life" is the motto of the new philosophy, and I maintain that in this respect, at any rate, the old was better.

With an increasing love of publicity has come an increasing contempt for reticence. In old days there were certain subjects which no one mentioned; among them were Health and Money. I presume that people had pretty much the same complaints as now, but no one talked about them. We used to be told of a lady who died in agony because she insisted on telling the doctor that the pain was in her chest whereas it really was in the unmentionable organ of digestion. That martyr to propriety has no imitators in the present day. Every one has a disease and a doctor; and young people of both sexes are ready on the slightest acquaintance to describe symptoms and compare experiences. "Ice!" exclaimed a pretty girl at dessert, "good gracious, no! so bad for indy"—and her companion, who had not travelled with the times, learned with amazement that "indy" was the pet name for indigestion. "How bitterly cold!" said a plump matron at an open-air luncheon; "just the thing to give one appendicitis." "Oh!" said her neighbour, surveying the company, "we are quite safe there. I shouldn't think we had an appendix between us."

Then, again, as to money. In the "Sacred

Circle of the Great-Grandmotherhood" I never heard the slightest reference to income. Not that the Whigs despised money. They were at least as fond of it as other people, and, even when it took the shape of slum-rents, its odour was not displeasing. But it was not a subject for conversation. People did not chatter about their neighbours' incomes; and, if they made their own money in trades or professions, they did not regale us with statistics of profit and loss. To-day every one seems to be, if I may use the favourite colloquialism, "on the make"; and the sincerity of the devotion with which people worship money pervades their whole conversation and colours their whole view of life. "Scions of aristocracy," to use the good old phrase of Pennialinus, will produce samples of tea or floor-cloth from their pockets, and sue quite winningly for custom. A speculative bottle of extraordinarily cheap peach-brandy will arrive with the compliments of Lord Tom Noddy, who has just gone into the wine trade, and Lord Magnus Charters will tell you that, if you are going to put in the electric light, his firm has got some really good fittings which he can let you have on specially easy terms.

But, if in old days Health and Money were subjects eschewed in polite conversation, even more rigid was the avoidance of "risky" topics. To-day no scandal is too gross, no gossip too prurient. Respectable mothers chatter quite freely about that "nest of spicery" over which Sir Gorell

Barnes presides, and canvass abominations with a self-possession worthy of Gibbon or Zola. In fact, as regards our topics of conversation, we seem to have reached the condition in which the Paris correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* found himself when Mr. Matthew Arnold (in "Friendship's Garland") spoke to him of Delicacy. "He seemed inexplicably struck by this word *delicacy*, which he kept repeating to himself. 'Delicacy,' said he; 'delicacy, surely I have heard that word before! Yes, in other days,' he went on dreamily, 'in my fresh enthusiastic youth, before I knew Sala, before I wrote for that infernal paper——.' 'Collect yourself, my friend,' said I, laying my hand on his shoulder, 'you are unmanned.'" A similar emotion would probably be caused by any one so old-fashioned as to protest that any conceivable topic was ill-adapted for discussion in general society.

An extreme decorum of phrase accompanied this salutary restriction of topics. To a boisterous youth who, just setting out for a choral festival in a country church, said that he always thought a musical service very jolly, an old Whig lady said in a tone of dignified amendment, "I trust, dear Mr. F——, that we shall derive not only pleasure but profit from the solemnity of this afternoon."

Closely related to the love of Publicity and the decay of Reticence is the change in the position of women. This is really a revolution, and it has so impartially pervaded all departments of life

that one may plunge anywhere into the subject and find the same phenomenon.

Fifty years ago the view that "comparisons don't become a young woman" still held the field, and, indeed, might have been much more widely extended. Nothing "became a young woman," which involved clear thinking or plain speaking or independent acting. Mrs. General and Mrs. Grundy were still powers in the land. "Prunes and Prism" were fair burlesques of actual shibboleths. "Fanny," said Mrs. General, "at present forms too many opinions. Perfect breeding forms none, and is never demonstrative." This was hardly a parody of the prevailing and accepted doctrine. To-day it would be difficult to find a subject on which contemporary Fannies do not form opinions, and express them with intense vigour, and translate them into corresponding action.

Fifty years ago a hunting woman was a rarity, even though Englishwomen had been horsewomen from time immemorial. Lady Arabella Vane's performances were still remembered in the neighbourhood of Darlington, and Lady William Powlett's "scarlet" habit was a tradition at Cottesmore. Mrs. Jack Villiers is the only horsewoman in the famous picture of the Quorn, and she suitably gave her name to the best covert in the Vale of Aylesbury. But now the hunting woman and the hunting girl pervade the land, cross their male friends at their fences, and ride over them



when they lie submerged in ditches, with an airy cheerfulness which wins all hearts. In brief, it may be said that, in respect of outdoor exercises, whatever men and boys do women and girls do. They drive four-in-hand and tandem, they manipulate Motors, they skate and cycle, and fence and swim. A young lady lately showed me a snapshot of herself learning to take a header. A male instructor, classically draped, stood on the bank, and she kindly explained that "the head in the water was the man we were staying with." Lawn-tennis and croquet are regarded as the amusements of the mild and the middle-aged; the ardour of girlhood requires hockey and golf. I am not sure whether girls have taken to Rugby football, but only last summer I saw a girl's cricket eleven dispose most satisfactorily of a boy's team.

I can well remember the time when a man, if perchance he met a lady while he was smoking in some rather unfrequented street, flung his cigar away and rather tried to look as if he had not been doing it. Yet so far have we travelled that not long ago, at a hospitable house not a hundred miles from Berkeley Square, the hostess and her daughter were the only smokers in a large luncheon-party, and prefaced their cigarettes by the courteous condition, "If you gentlemen don't mind."

Then, again, the political woman is a product of these latter days. In old times a woman served her husband's political party by keeping a *salon*,

giving dinners to the bigwigs, and "roust" to the rank and file. I do not forget the heroic electioneering of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, but her example was not widely followed. On great occasions ladies sate in secluded galleries at public meetings, and encouraged the halting rhetoric of sons or husbands by waving pocket-handkerchiefs. If a triumphant return was to be celebrated, the ladies of the hero's family might gaze from above on the congratulatory banquet, like the house-party at Lothair's coming of age, to whom the "three times three and one cheer more" seemed like a "great naval battle, or the end of the world, or anything else of unimaginable excitement, tumult, and confusion."

When it was reported that a celebrated lady of the present day complained of the stuffiness and gloom of the Ladies' Gallery in the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone—that stiffest of social conservatives—exclaimed, "Mrs. W——, forsooth! I have known much greater ladies than Mrs. W—— quite content to look down through the ventilator."

## XLV

### TOWN V. COUNTRY

I SAID at the outset that I am a Whig *pur sang*; and the historic Whigs were very worthy people. A first-rate specimen of the race was that Duke of Bedford whom Junius lampooned, and whom his great-grandson, Lord John Russell, championed in an interesting contrast. "The want of practical religion and morals which Lord Chesterfield held up to imitation, conducted the French nobility to the guillotine and emigration: the honesty, the attachment to religion, the country habits, the love of home, the activity in rural business and rural sports, in which the Duke of Bedford and others of his class delighted, preserved the English aristocracy from a flood which swept over half of Europe, laying prostrate the highest of her palaces, and scattering the ashes of the most sacred of her monuments."

This quotation forms a suitable introduction to the social change which is the subject of the present chapter. In old days, people who had country houses lived in them. It was the magnificent misfortune of the Duke in "Lothair" to have so many castles that he had no home. In those

days the tradition of Duty required people who had several country houses to spend some time in each of them; and those who had only one passed nine months out of twelve under its sacred roof—sacred because it was inseparably connected with memories of ancestry and parentage and early association, with marriage and children, and pure enjoyments and active benevolence and neighbourly goodwill. In a word, the country house was Home.

People who had no country house were honestly pitied; perhaps they were also a little despised. The most gorgeous mansion in Cromwell Road or Tyburnia could never for a moment be quoted as supplying the place of the Hall or the Manor.

For people who had a country house the interests of life were very much bound up in the park and the covers, the croquet-ground and the cricket-ground, the kennel, the stable, and the garden. I remember, when I was an undergraduate, lionizing some Yorkshire damsels on their first visit to Oxford, then in the "high mid-summer pomp" of its beauty. But all they said was, in the pensive tone of an unwilling exile, "How beautifully the sun must be shining on the South Walk at home!"

The village church was a great centre of domestic affection. All the family had been christened in it. The eldest sister had been married in it. Generations of ancestry mouldered under the chancel floor. Christmas decorations were an

occasion of much innocent merriment, and a little ditty high in favour in Tractarian homes warned the decorators to be—

“ Unselfish—looking not to see  
Proofs of their own dexterity ;  
But quite contented that ‘ I ’ should  
Forgotten be in brotherhood.”

Of course, whether Tractarian or Evangelical, religious people regarded church-going as a spiritual privilege ; but every one recognized it as a civil duty. “ When a gentleman is *sur ses terres*,” said Major Pendennis, “ he must give an example to the country people ; and, if I could turn a tune, I even think I should sing. The Duke of St. David’s, whom I have the honour of knowing, always sings in the country, and let me tell you it has a doosed fine effect from the family pew.” Before the passion for “ restoration ” had set in, and ere yet Sir Gilbert Scott had transmogrified the parish churches of England, the family pew was indeed the ark and sanctuary of the territorial system—and a very comfortable ark too. It had a private entrance, a round table, a good assortment of arm-chairs, a fireplace, and a wood-basket. And I well remember a washleather glove of unusual size which was kept in the wood-basket for the greater convenience of making up the fire during divine service. “ You may restore the church as much as you like,” said an old friend of my youth, who was lay-rector, to an innovating incumbent, “ but I must insist on my

family pew not being touched. If I had to sit in an open seat, I should never get a wink of sleep again."

A country home left its mark for all time on those who were brought up in it. The sons played cricket and went bat-fowling with the village boys, and not seldom joined with them in a poaching enterprise in the paternal preserves. However popular or successful or happy a Public-School boy might be at Eton or Harrow, he counted the days till he could return to his pony and his gun, his ferrets and rat-trap and fishing-rod. Amid all the toil and worry of active life, he looked back lovingly to the corner of the cover where he shot his first pheasant, or the precise spot in the middle of the Vale where he first saw a fox killed, and underwent the disgusting baptism of blood.

Girls, living more continuously at home, entered even more intimately into the daily life of the place. Their morning rides led them across the village green; their afternoon drives were often steered by the claims of this or that cottage to a visit. They were taught as soon as they could toddle never to enter a door without knocking, never to sit down without being asked, and never to call at meal-time.

They knew every one in the village—old and young; played with the babies, taught the boys in Sunday School, carried savoury messes to the old and impotent, read by the sick-beds, and

brought flowers for the coffin. Mamma knitted comforters and dispensed warm clothing, organized relief in hard winters and times of epidemic, and found places for the hobbledehoys of both sexes. The pony-boy and the scullery-maid were pretty sure to be products of the village. Very likely the young-ladies-maid was a village girl whom the doctor had pronounced too delicate for factory or farm. I have seen an excited young groom staring his eyes out of his head at the Eton and Harrow match, and exclaiming with rapture at a good catch, "It was my young governor as 'scouted' that. 'E's nimble, ain't 'e?" And I well remember an ancient stable-helper at a country house in Buckinghamshire who was called "Old Bucks," because he had never slept out of his native county, and very rarely out of his native village, and had spent his whole life in the service of one family.

Of course, when so much of the impressionable part of life was lived amid the "sweet, sincere surroundings of country life," there grew up, between the family at the Hall and the families in the village, a feeling which, in spite of our national unsentimentality, had a chivalrous and almost feudal tone. The interest of the poor in the life and doings of "The Family" was keen and genuine. The English peasant is too much a gentleman to be a flatterer, and compliments were often bestowed in very unexpected forms. "They do tell me as 'is understanding's no worse

than it always were," was a ploughman's way of saying that the old squire was in full possession of his faculties. "We call 'im 'Is Lordship," because 'e's so old and so cunning," was another's description of a famous pony. "Ah, I know you're but a poor creature at the best!" was the recognized way of complimenting a lady on what she considered her bewitching and romantic delicacy.

But these eccentricities were merely verbal, and under them lay a deep vein of genuine and lasting regard. "I've lived under four dukes and four 'ousekeepers, and I'm not going to be put upon in my old age!" was the exclamation of an ancient poultry-woman, whose dignity had been offended by some irregularity touching her Christmas dinner. When the daughter of the house married and went into a far country, she was sure to find some emigrant from her old home who welcomed her with effusion, and was full of enquiries about his lordship and her ladyship, and Miss Pinkerton the governess, and whether Mr. Wheeler was still coachman, and who lived now at the entrance-lodge. Whether the sons got commissions, or took ranches, or become curates in slums, or contested remote constituencies, some grinning face was sure to emerge from the crowd with, "You know me, sir? Bill Juffs, as used to go bird's-nesting with you;" or, "You remember my old dad, my lord? He used to shoe your black pony."



When the eldest son came of age, his condescension in taking this step was hailed with genuine enthusiasm. When he came into his kingdom, there might be some grumbling if he went in for small economies, or altered old practices, or was a "hard man" on the Bench or at the Board of Guardians; but, if he went on in the good-natured old ways, the traditional loyalty was unabated.

Lord Shaftesbury wrote thus about the birth of his eldest son's eldest son: "My little village is all agog with the birth of a son and heir in the very midst of them, the first, it is believed, since 1600, when the first Lord Shaftesbury was born. The christening yesterday was an ovation. Every cottage had flags and flowers. We had three triumphal arches; and all the people were exulting. 'He is one of us.' 'He is a fellow-villager.' 'We have now got a lord of our own.' This is really gratifying. I did not think that there remained so much of the old respect and affection between peasant and proprietor, landlord and tenant."

Whether the kind of relation thus described has utterly perished I do not know; but certainly it has very greatly diminished, and the cause of the diminution is that people live less and less in their country houses, and more and more in London. For those who are compelled by odious necessity to sell or let their hereditary homes one has nothing but compassion; in itself a severe trial, it is made

still sharper to well-conditioned people by the sense that the change is at least as painful to the poor as to themselves. But for those who, having both a country and a London house, deliberately concentrate themselves on the town, forsake the country, and abjure the duties which are inseparable from their birthright, one can only feel Charles Lamb's "imperfect sympathy." The causes which induce this dereliction and its results on society and on the country may be discussed in another chapter.

## XLVI

### HOME

I WAS speaking just now of the growing tendency to desert the country in favour of London. I said that it was difficult to feel sympathy with people who voluntarily abandon Home, and all the duties and pleasures which Home implies, in favour of Lennox Gardens or Portman Square; but that one felt a lively compassion for those who make the exchange under the pressure of—

“Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear.”

Here, again, is another social change. In old days, when people wished to economize, it was London that they deserted. They sold the “family mansion” in Portland Place or Eaton Square; and, if they revisited the glimpses of the social moon, they took a furnished house for six weeks in the summer: the rest of the year they spent in the country. This plan was a manifold saving. There was no rent to pay, and only very small rates, for every one knows that country houses were shamefully under-assessed. Carriages did not require repainting every season, and no new clothes were wanted. “What can it matter what

we wear here, where every one knows who we are?" The products of the park, the home farm, the hothouses, and the kitchen-garden kept the family supplied with food. A brother magnate staying at Beaudesert with the famous Lord Anglesey waxed enthusiastic over the mutton, and said, "Excuse my asking you a plain question, but how much does this excellent mutton cost you?" "Cost me?" screamed the hero. "Good Gad, it costs me nothing! It's my own," and he was beyond measure astonished when his statistical guest proved that "his own" cost him about a guinea per pound. In another great house, conducted on strictly economical lines, it was said that the very numerous family were reared exclusively on rabbits and garden-stuff, and that their enfeebled constitutions and dismal appearance in later life were due to this ascetic regimen.

People were always hospitable in the country, but rural entertaining was not a very costly business. The "three square meals and a snack," which represent the minimum requirement of the present day, are a huge development of the system which prevailed in my youth. Breakfast had already grown from the tea and coffee, and rolls and eggs, which Macaulay tells us were deemed sufficient at Holland House, to an affair of covered dishes. Luncheon-parties were sometimes given—terrible ceremonies which lasted from two to four; but the ordinary luncheon of the family

was really a snack from the servants' joint or the children's rice-pudding; and five o'clock tea was actually not invented. To remember, as I do, the foundress of that divine refreshment seems like having known Stephenson or Jenner.

Dinner was substantial enough in all conscience, and the wine nearly as heavy as the food. Imagine quenching one's thirst with sherry in the dog days! Yet so we did, till about half-way through dinner, and then, on great occasions, a dark-coloured rill of champagne began to trickle into the saucer-shaped glasses. At the epoch of cheese, port made its appearance in company with home-brewed beer; and, as soon as the ladies and the schoolboys departed, the men applied themselves, with much seriousness of purpose, to the consumption of claret which was really vinous.

In this kind of hospitality there was no great expense. People made very little difference between their way of living when they were alone and their way of living when they had company. A visitor who wished to make himself agreeable sometimes brought down a basket of fish or a barrel of oysters from London; and, if one had no deer of one's own, the arrival of a haunch from a neighbour's or kinsman's park was the signal for a gathering of local gastronomers.

And in matters other than meals life went on very much the same whether you had friends staying with you or whether you were alone.

Your guests drove and rode, and walked and shot, according to their tastes and the season of the year. They were carried off, more or less willingly, to see the sights of the neighbourhood—ruined castles, restored cathedrals, famous views. In summer there might be a picnic or a croquet-party; in winter a lawn-meet or a ball. But all these entertainments were of the most homely and inexpensive character. There was very little outlay, no fuss, and no display. People, who were compelled by stress of financial weather to put into their country houses and remain there till the storm was over, contrived to economize and yet be comfortable. They simply lived their ordinary lives until things righted themselves, and very likely did not attempt London again until they were bringing out another daughter, or had to make a home for a son in the Guards.

But now an entirely different spirit prevails. People seem to have lost the power of living quietly and happily in their country homes. They all have imbibed the urban philosophy of George Warrington, who, when Pen gushed about the country with its "long calm days, and long calm evenings," brutally replied, "Devilish long, and a great deal too calm. I've tried 'em." People of that type desert the country simply because they are bored by it. They feel with Mr. Luke in "The New Republic," who, after talking about "liberal air," "sedged brooks," and "meadow grass," admitted that it would be a horrid bore

to have no other society than the clergyman of the parish, and no other topics of conversation than Justification by Faith and the measles. They do not care for the country in itself; they have no eye for its beauty, no sense of its atmosphere, no memory for its traditions. It is only made endurable to them by sport and gambling and boisterous house-parties; and, when from one cause or another these resources fail, they are frankly bored and long for London. They are no longer content, as our fathers were, to entertain their friends with hospitable simplicity. So profoundly has all society been vulgarized by the worship of the Golden Calf that, unless people can vie with alien millionaires in the sumptuousness with which they "do you"—delightful phrase,—they prefer not to entertain at all. An emulous ostentation has killed hospitality.

So now, when a season of financial pressure sets in, people shut up their country houses, let their shooting, cut themselves off with a sigh of relief from all the unexciting duties and simple pleasures of the Home, and take refuge from boredom in the delights of London. In London life has no duties. Little is expected of one, and nothing required. One can live on a larger or a smaller scale according to one's taste or one's purse; cramp oneself in a doll's house in Mayfair, or expand one's wings in a Kensingtonian mansion; or even contract oneself into

a flat, or hide one's diminished head in the upper storey of a shop. One can entertain or not entertain, spend much or spend little, live on one's friends or be lived on by them, exactly as one finds most convenient: and unquestionably social freedom is a great element in human happiness.

For many natures London has an attractiveness which is all its own, and yet to indulge one's taste for it may be a grave dereliction of duty. The State is built upon the Home; and, as a training-place for social virtue, there can surely be no comparison between a home in the country and a home in London.

“Home! Sweet Home!” Yes. (I am quoting now from my friend, Henry Scott Holland.) That is the song that goes straight to the heart of every English man and woman. For forty years we have never asked Madame Adelina Patti to sing anything else. The unhappy, decadent, Latin races have not even a word in their languages by which to express it, poor things! Home is the secret of our honest British Protestant virtues. It is the only nursery of our Anglo-Saxon citizenship. Back to it our far-flung children turn with all their memories aflame. They may lapse into rough ways, but they keep something sound at the core so long as they are faithful to the old Home. There is still a tenderness in the voice, and tears are in their eyes, as they speak together of the days that can never die out of their lives, when they were at



home in the old familiar places, with father and mother in the healthy gladness of their childhood. Ah !

“ Home ! Sweet Home !  
There’s no place like Home.”

That is what we all repeat, and all believe, and cheer to the echo. And, behind all our British complacency about it, nobody would deny the vital truth that there is in this belief of ours. Whatever tends to make the Home beautiful, attractive, romantic—to associate it with the ideas of pure pleasure and high duty—to connect it not only with all that was happiest but also with all that was best in early years—whatever fulfils these purposes purifies the fountains of national life. A home, to be perfectly a home, should “incorporate tradition, and prolong the reign of the dead.” It should animate those who dwell in it to virtue and beneficence by reminding them of what others did, who went before them in the same place and lived amid the same surroundings.

## XLVII

### HOSPITALITY

IN my last chapter I was deploring the modern tendency of society to desert the country and cultivate London. And the reason why I deplore it is that all the educating influences of the Home are so infinitely weaker in the town than in the country. In a London home there is nothing to fascinate the eye. The contemplation of the mews and the chimney-pots through the back windows of the nursery will not elevate even the most impressible child. There is no mystery, no dreamland, no Enchanted Palace, no Bluebeard's Chamber, in a stucco mansion built by Cubitt or a palace of terracotta on the Cadogan estate. There can be no traditions of the past, no inspiring memories of virtuous ancestry, in a house which your father bought five years ago and of which the previous owners are not known to you even by name. "The Square" or "the Gardens" are sorry substitutes for the Park and the Pleasure-grounds, the Common and the Downs. Crossing-sweepers are a deserving folk, but you cannot cultivate those intimate relations with them which bind you to the lodge-keeper at home, or to the old women in the almshouses, or the octogenarian

waggoner who has driven your father's team ever since he was ten years old. St. Peter's, Eaton Square, or All Saints, Margaret Street, may be beautifully ornate, and the congregation what Lord Beaconsfield called "brisk and modish"; but they can never have the romantic charm of the country church where you were confirmed side by side with the keeper's son, or proposed to the vicar's daughter when you were wreathing holly round the lectern.

Then, again, as regards social relations with friends and neighbours. "An emulous ostentation has destroyed hospitality." This I believe is absolutely true, and it is one of the worst changes which I have seen. I have already spoken of hospitality as practised in the country. Now I will say a word about hospitality in London.

Of course rich people always gave banquets from time to time, and these were occasions when, in Lord Beaconsfield's drolly vulgar phrase, "the dinner was stately, as befits the high nobility." They were ceremonious observances, conducted on the constitutional principle of "cutlet for cutlet," and must always have been regarded by all concerned in them, whether as hosts or guests, in the light of duty rather than of pleasure. Twenty people woke that morning with the impression that something was to be gone through before bedtime, which they would be glad enough to escape. Each of the twenty went to bed that night more or less weary and ruffled, but sus-

tained by the sense that a social duty had been performed. Banquets, however, at the worst were only periodical events. Real hospitality was constant and informal.

“Come and dine to-night. Eight o'clock. Pot luck. Don't dress.”

“My dear, I am going to bring back two or three men from the House. Don't put off dinner in case we are kept by a division.”

“I am afraid I must be going back. I am only paired till eleven. Good-night, and so many thanks.”

“Good-night; you will always find some dinner here on Government nights. Do look in again!”

These are the cheerful echoes of parliamentary homes in the older and better days of unostentatious entertaining, and those “pot luck” dinners often played an important part in political manœuvre. Sir George Trevelyan, whose early manhood was passed in the thick of parliamentary society, tells us, in a footnote to “The Ladies in Parliament,” that in the season of 1866 there was much gossip over the fact of Lord Russell having entertained Mr. Bright at dinner, and that people were constantly—

“Discussing whether Bright can scan and understand  
the lines

About the Wooden Horse of Troy; and when and  
where he dines.

Though gentlemen should blush to talk as if they  
cared a button

Because one night in Chesham Place he ate his slice  
of mutton.”

Quite apart from parliamentary strategy, impromptu entertaining in what was called "a friendly way" had its special uses in the social system. There is a delicious passage in "Lothair" describing that hero's initiation into an easier and more graceful society than that in which he had been reared: "He had been a guest at the occasional banquets of his uncle, but these were festivals of the Picts and Scots; rude plenty and coarse splendour, with noise instead of conversation, and a tumult of obstructive dependants, who impeded by their want of skill the very convenience which they were purposed to facilitate." An amazing sentence indeed, but like all Lord Beaconsfield's writings, picturesquely descriptive, and happily contrasted with the succeeding scene: "A table covered with flowers, bright with fanciful crystal, and porcelain that had belonged to Sovereigns who had given a name to its colour or its form. As for those present, all seemed grace and gentleness, from the radiant daughters of the house to the noiseless attendants who anticipated all his wants, and sometimes seemed to suggest his wishes."

The mention of "Lothair" reminds people of my date that thirty years ago we knew a house justly famed for the excellent marriages which the daughters made. There banquets were unknown, and even dinners by invitation very rare. The father used to collect young men from Lord's, or the Lobby, or the Club, or wherever

he had been spending the afternoon. Servants were soon dismissed—"It is such a bore to have them staring at one"—and the daughters of the house waited on the guests. Here obviously were matrimonial openings not to be despised; and, even in families where there were no ulterior objects to be served, these free-and-easy entertainings went on from February to July. Short invitations, pleasant company, and genuine friendliness were the characteristics of these gatherings. Very often the dinner was carved on the table. One could ask for a second slice or another wing without feeling greedy, and the claret and *amontillado* were within the reach of every guest. This, I consider, was genuine hospitality, for it was natural, easy, and unostentatious.

But now, according to all accounts, the spirit of entertaining is utterly changed. A dinner is not so much an opportunity of pleasing your friends as of airing your own magnificence; and ostentation, despicable in itself, is doubly odious because it is emulous. If A has a good cook, B must have a better. If C gave you ortolans stuffed with truffles, D must have truffles stuffed with ortolans. If the E's table is piled with strawberries in April, the F's must retaliate with orchids at a guinea a blossom. G is a little inclined to swagger about his wife's pearl necklace, and H is bound in honour to decorate Mrs. H with a *rivière* which belonged to the crown jewels of France.

And, as with the food and the decorations, so

also with the company. Here, again, Emulous Ostentation carries all before it. Mr. Goldbug is a Yahoo, but he made his millions in South Africa and spends them in Park Lane. Lord Heath is the most abandoned bore in Christendom, but he is an authority at Newmarket. Lady Bellair has had a notoriously chequered career, but she plays bridge in exalted circles. As Lord Crewe sings of a similar enchantress—

“From reflections we shrink ;  
And of comment are chary ;  
But her face is *so* pink,  
And it don't seem to vary.”

However, she is unquestionably smart; and Goldbug is a useful man to know; and we are not going to be outdone by the Cashingtons, who got Heath to dine with them twice last year. So we invite our guests, not because we like them or admire them, for that in these cases is impossible; not—heaven knows—because they are beautiful or famous or witty; but because they are the right people to have in one's house, and we will have the right people or perish in the attempt.

## XLVIII

### OSTENTATION

IT is many a long year since I saw the inside of a ballroom, but by all accounts very much the same change has come over the spirit of ball-giving as of dinner-giving. Here again the "Emulous Ostentation" which I have described is the enemy. When I first grew up, there were infinitely more balls than now. From Easter till August there were at least two every night, and a hostess counted herself lucky if she had only one rival to contend with. Between 11 P.M. and 2 A.M. Grosvenor Place was blocked by the opposing streams of carriages going from Mayfair to Belgravia, and from Belgravia to Mayfair. There were three or four really great Houses—"Houses" with a capital H—such as Grosvenor House, Stafford House, Dudley House, and Montagu House—where a ball could scarcely help being an event—or, as Pennialinus would say, "a function." But, putting these on one side, the great mass of hostesses contrived to give excellent balls, where every one went and every one enjoyed themselves, with very little fuss and no ostentation. The drawing-room of an ordinary house in Belgravia



or Grosvenor Square made a perfectly sufficient ballroom. A good floor, a good band, and plenty of light, were the only essentials of success. Decoration was represented by such quaint devices as pink muslin on the banisters, or green festoons dependent from the chandelier. A good supper was an additional merit; and, if the host produced his best champagne, he was held in just esteem by dancing men. But yet I well remember a cold supper at a ball which the present King and Queen attended, in 1881, and no one grumbled, though perhaps the young bloods thought it a little old-fashioned. The essence of a good ball was not expense or display or overwhelming preparation, but the certainty that you would meet your friends. Boys and girls danced, and married women looked on, or only stole a waltz when their juniors were at supper. In those days a ball was really a merry-making.

Nowadays I gather from the *Morning Post* that balls are comparatively rare events, but what they lack in frequency they make up in ostentation. As to the sums which the Heits and the Heims, the Le Beers and the De Porters, lavish on one night's entertainment I hear statistical accounts which not only outrage economy but stagger credibility. Here again the rushing flood of ill-gotten gold has overflowed its banks, and polluted the "crystal river of unreprieved enjoyment."

There is yet another form of entertainment

which Emulous Ostentation has destroyed. A few years ago there still were women in London who could hold a "salon." Of these gatherings the principal attraction was the hostess, and, in a secondary degree, the agreeableness of the people whom she could gather round her. Of fuss and finery, decoration and display, there was absolutely nothing. A typical instance of what I mean will perhaps recur to the memory of some who read this chapter. Picture to yourself two not very large and rather dingy rooms. The furniture is dark and old-fashioned—mahogany and rosewood, with here and there a good cabinet or a French armchair. No prettiness of lace and china; no flowers; and not very much light. Books everywhere, some good engravings, a comfortable sofa, and a tray of tea and coffee. That was all. It is difficult to conceive a less ostentatious or a more economical mode of entertaining; yet the lady who presided over that "salon" had been for fifty years one of the most celebrated women in Europe; had been embraced by Napoleon; had flirted with the Allied Sovereigns; had been described by Byron; had discussed scholarship with Grote, and statecraft with Metternich; had sate to Lawrence, and caballed with Antonelli. Even in old age and decrepitude she opened her rooms to her friends every evening in the year, and never, even in the depths of September, found her court deserted. Certainly it was a social triumph, and one has

only to compare it with the scene in the stock-broker's saloon—the blaze of electric light, the jungle of flowers, the furniture from Sinclair's, the pictures from Christie's—and to contrast the assembled guests. Instead of celebrities, notorieties—woman at once under-dressed and over-dressed; men with cent. per cent. written deep in every line of their expressive countenances; and, at the centre of the throng, a hostess in a diamond crown, who conducts her correspondence by telegraph, because her spelling is a little shaky and mistakes in telegrams are charitably attributed to the clerks.

One of the worst properties of Emulous Ostentation is that it naturally affects its victims with an insatiable thirst for money. If Mrs. Tymmys in Onslow Gardens is to have as good a dinner, and as smart a victoria, and as large a tiara, as her friend Mrs. Goldbug in Park Lane, it is obvious that Mr. Tymmys must find the money somehow. Who wills the end wills the means; and, if social exigencies demand a larger outlay, the Tymmyses cannot afford to be too scrupulous about their method of providing for it. I suppose it is this consideration which makes us just now a nation of gamblers, whereas our more respectable but less adventurous fathers were well content to be a nation of shopkeepers.

Of course, in all ages there has been a gambling clique in society; but in old days it kept itself, as the saying is, to itself. Of necessity it always

was on the look-out for neophytes to initiate and to pillage, but the non-gambling majority of society regarded the gambling minority with horror; and a man who palpably meant to make money out of a visit to a country house would probably have been requested to withdraw. "Order a fly for Mr. L. at eleven o'clock," said old Lord Crewe to the butler when a guest had committed a social atrocity under his roof. "Thank you, Lord Crewe," said Mr. L., "but not for me. I am not going to-day." "Oh yes, you are," responded the host, and secreted himself in his private apartments till the offender had been duly extruded. Similar justice would, I think, have been dealt out to a gambler who rooked the young and the inexperienced. Not so to-day; the pigeon, however unfledged and tender, is the appointed prey of the rook, and the venerable bird who does the plucking is entirely undeterred by any considerations of pity, shame, or fear. "Is he any good?" is a question which circulates round the Board of Green Cloth whenever a new face fresh from Oxford or Sandhurst is noted in the social throng. "Oh yes, he's all right; I know his people," may be the cheerful response; or else, in a very different note, "No, he hasn't got a feather to fly with." Fortunate is the youth on whom this disparaging verdict is pronounced, for in that case he may escape the benevolent attentions of the

"Many-wintered crow  
That leads the gambling rookery home."

But even impecuniosity does not always protect the inexperienced. A lady who had lived for some years in the country returned to London not long ago, and, enumerating the social changes which she had observed, she said, "People seem to marry on £500 a year and yet have diamond tiaras." It was, perhaps, a too hasty generalization, but an instance in point immediately recurred to my recollection. A young couple had married with no other means of subsistence than smartness, good looks, and pleasant manners. After a prolonged tour round the country houses of their innumerable friends, they settled down at Woolwich. "Why Woolwich?" was the natural enquiry; and the reason, when at length it came to light, was highly characteristic of the age. It appeared that these kind young people used to give nice little evening parties, invite the "Gentlemen Cadets" from Woolwich Academy, and make them play cards for money. The device of setting up housekeeping on the pocket-money of babes and sucklings is thoroughly symptomatic of our decadence. Emulous Ostentation makes every one want more money than he has, and at the same time drugs all scruples of conscience as to the method of obtaining it.

## XLIX

### PRINCIPLE AND PREJUDICE

MR. J. A. FROUDE once told me that he did not in the least mind the accusation which was brought against him (certainly not without reason) of being prejudiced. "A good stiff prejudice," he said, "is a very useful thing. It is like a rusty weather-cock. It will yield to a strong and long-continued blast of conviction, but it does not veer round and round in compliance with every shifting current of opinion."

What Mr. Froude expressed other people felt, though perhaps they would not have cared to avow it so honestly.

One of the most notable changes which I have seen is the decay of prejudice. In old days people felt strongly and spoke strongly, and acted as they spoke. In every controversy they were absolutely certain that they were right and that the other side was wrong, and they did not mince their words when they expressed their opinions.

The first Lord Leicester of the present creation (1775-1844) told my father (1807-1894) that, when he was a boy, his grandfather had taken him on his knee and said, "Now, my dear Tom, whatever

else you do in life, mind you never trust a Tory ;" and Lord Leicester added, "I never have, and, by George, I never will." On the other hand, when Dr. Longley, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, did homage on his appointment to the see of Ripon, King William IV. said, "Bishop of Ripon, I charge you, as you shall answer before Almighty God, that you never by word or deed give encouragement to those d——d Whigs, who would upset the Church of England."

John Keble, the gentle saint of the Tractarian movement, when he saw the Whigs preparing to attack the property of the Church, proclaimed that the time had come when "scoundrels should be called scoundrels." And the Tractarians had no monopoly of vigorous invective, for, when their famous "Tract XC." incurred the censure of an Evangelical dean, he urbanely remarked that "he would be sorry to trust the author of that tract with his purse."

Macaulay, on the morning after a vital division, in which the Whigs had saved their places by seventy-nine votes, wrote triumphantly to his sister—

"So hang the dirty Tories, and let them starve and pine,  
And hurrah! for the majority of glorious seventy-nine."

The same cordial partisan wrote of a political opponent that he was "a bad, a very bad, man; a disgrace to politics and to literature;" and, of an acquaintance who had offended him socially,

"his powers gone; his spite immortal—a dead nettle."

The great and good Lord Shaftesbury, repudiating the theology of "Ecce Homo," pronounced it "the most pestilential book ever vomited from the jaws of Hell;" and, dividing his political favours with admirable impartiality, he denounced "the brazen faces, low insults, and accursed effrontery" of the Radicals; declared that Mr. Gladstone's "public life had long been an effort to retain his principles and yet not lose his position;" and dismissed Lord Beaconsfield as "a leper, without principle, without feeling, without regard to anything, human or divine, beyond his personal ambition." In the same spirit of hearty prejudice, Bishop Wilberforce deplored the political exigencies which had driven his friend Gladstone into "the foul arms of the Whigs." In the opposite camp was ranged a lady, well remembered in the inner circles of Whiggery, who never would enter a four-wheeled cab until she had elicited from the driver that he *was not* a Puseyite and *was* a Whig.

"Mamma," asked a little girl of Whig parentage, who from her cradle had heard nothing but denunciation of her father's political opponents, "are Tories born wicked, or do they grow wicked afterwards?" And her mother judiciously replied, "My dear, they are born wicked and grow worse."

But alas! they are "gone down to Hades,



even many stalwart sons of heroes,"—with King William at their head, and Lord Shaftesbury and Lord Leicester, and Keble and Macaulay and Froude in his wake—men who knew what they believed, and, knowing it, were not ashamed to avow it, and saw little to praise or like in the adherents of a contrary opinion.

They are gone, and we are left—an unprejudiced, but an invertebrate and a flaccid, generation. No one seems to believe anything very firmly. No one has the slightest notion of putting himself to any inconvenience for his belief. No one dreams of disliking or distrusting a political or religious opponent, or of treating difference of opinion as a line of social cleavage.

In old days, King Leopold of Belgium told Bishop Wilberforce that "the only position for a Church was to say, 'Believe this or you are damned.'" To-day nothing in religion is regarded as unquestionably true. When the late Archbishop Benson first became acquainted with society in London, he asked, in shocked amazement, "What do these people believe?"—and no very satisfactory answer was forthcoming. If society has any religious beliefs (and this is more than questionable), it holds them with the loosest grasp, and is on the easiest terms of intercourse with every other belief and unbelief. The most fashionable teachers of religion have one eye nervously fixed on the ever-shifting currents of negation, talk plausibly about putting

the Faith in its proper relation with modern thought, and toil panting in the wake of science; only to find each fresh theory exploded just at the moment when they have managed to apprehend it.

We used to be taught in our nurseries that, when "Old Daddy Longlegs wouldn't say his prayers," it was our duty to "Take him by the left leg and throw him downstairs;" and the student of folklore will be pleased to observe in this ditty the immemorial inclination of mankind to punish people who will not square their religion with ours. The spirit of religious persecution dies hard, but the decay of prejudice has sapped its strength. It does not thrive in the atmosphere of modern indifferentism, and admirable ladies who believe that Ritualists ride donkeys on Palm Sunday and sacrifice lambs on Good Friday find it difficult to revive the cry of "No Popery" with any practical effect.

The decay of prejudice in the sphere of politics is even more remarkable than in that of religion. In old days, political agreement was a strong and a constraining bond. When people saw a clear right and wrong in politics, they governed their private as well as their public life accordingly. People who held the same political beliefs lived and died together. In society and hospitality, in work and recreation, in journalism and literature—even in such seemingly indifferent matters as art and the drama—they were closely and permanently associated.

Eton was supposed to cherish a romantic affection for the Stuarts, and therefore to be a fit training place for sucking Tories; Harrow had always been Hanoverian, and therefore attracted little Whigs to its Hill. Oxford, with its Caroline theology and Jacobite tradition, was the Tory university; Cambridge was the nursing-mother of Whigs, until Edinburgh, under the influence of Jeffrey and Brougham, tore her babes from her breast. In society you must choose between the Duchess of Devonshire and the Duchess of Gordon, or, in a later generation, between Lady Holland and Lady Jersey. In clubland the width of St. James's Street marked a dividing line of abysmal depth; and to this day "Grillon's" remains the memorial of an attempt, then unique, to bring politicians of opposite sides together in social intercourse. On the one side stood Scott—where Burke had stood before him—the Guardian Angel of Monarchy and Aristocracy: on the other were Shelley and Byron, and (till they turned their coats) the emancipated singers of Freedom and Humanity. The two political parties had even their favourite actors, and the Tories swore by Kemble while the Whigs roared for Kean.

Then, as now, the Tories were a wealthy, powerful, and highly-organized confederacy. The Whigs were notoriously a family party. From John, Lord Gower, who died in 1754, and was the great-great-great-grandfather of the present Duke of Sutherland, descend all the Gowers,

Levesons, Howards, Cavendishes, Grosvenors, Harcourts, and Russells who walk on the face of the earth. It is a goodly company. Well might Thackeray exclaim, "I'm not a Whig; but oh, how I should like to be one!"

Lord Beaconsfield described in "Coningsby" how the Radical manufacturer, sending his boy to Eton, charged him to form no intimacies with his father's hereditary foes. This may have been a flight of fancy; but certainly, when a lad was going to Oxford or Cambridge, his parents and family friends would warn him against entering into friendships with the other side. The University Clubs which he joined and the votes which he gave at the Union were watched with anxious care. He was early initiated into the political society to which his father belonged. Extraneous intimacies were regarded with the most suspicious anxiety. Mothers did all they knew to make their darlings acquainted with daughters of families whose political faith was pure, and I have myself learned, by not remote tradition, the indignant horror which pervaded a great Whig family when the heir-presumptive to its honours married the daughter of a Tory Lord Chamberlain. "That girl will ruin the politics of the family and undo the work of two hundred years" was the prophecy; and I have seen it fulfilled.

## L

### CULTURE

ONE of the social changes which most impresses me is the decay of intellectual cultivation. This may sound paradoxical in an age which habitually talks so much about Education and Culture ; but I am persuaded that it is true. Dilettantism is universal, and a smattering of erudition, infinitely more offensive than honest and manly ignorance, has usurped the place which was formerly occupied by genuine and liberal learning. My own view of the subject is probably tinged by the fact that I was born a Whig and brought up in a Whiggish society ; for the Whigs were rather specially the allies of learning, and made it a point of honour to know, though never to parade, the best that has been thought and written. Very likely they had no monopoly of culture, and the Tories were just as well-informed. But a man "belongs to his belongings," and one can only describe what one has seen ; and here the contrast between Past and Present is palpable enough. I am not now thinking of professed scholars and students, such as Lord Stanhope and Sir Charles Bunbury, or of professed blue-stockings, such as

Barbarina Lady Dacre and Georgiana Lady Chatterton; but of ordinary men and women of good family and good position, who had received the usual education of their class and had profited by it.

Mr. Gladstone used to say that, in his school-days at Eton, it was possible to learn much or to learn nothing, but it was not possible to learn superficially. And one saw the same in after-life. What people professed to know they knew. The affectation of culture was despised; and ignorance, where it existed, was honestly confessed. For example, every one knew Italian, but no one pretended to know German. I remember men who had never been to a University but had passed straight from a Public School to a Cavalry Regiment or the House of Commons, and who yet could quote Horace as easily as the present generation quotes Kipling. These people inherited the traditions of Mrs. Montagu, who "vindicated the genius of Shakespeare against the calumnies of Voltaire," and they knew the greatest poet of all time with an absolute ease and familiarity. They did not trouble themselves about various readings and corrupt texts and difficult passages. They had nothing in common with that true father of all Shakespearean criticism, Mr. Curdle in "Nicholas Nickleby," who had written a treatise on the question whether Juliet's nurse's husband was really "a merry man" or whether it was merely

his widow's affectionate partiality that induced her so to report him. But they knew the whole mass of the plays with a wide and generous intimacy; their speech was saturated with the immortal diction, and Hamlet's speculations were their nearest approach to metaphysics.

Broadly speaking, all educated people knew the English poets down to the end of the eighteenth century. Byron and Moore were enjoyed with a sort of furtive and fearful pleasure; and Wordsworth was tolerated. Every one knew Scott's novels by heart, and had his or her favourite heroine and hero.

Then, again, all educated people knew history in a broad and comprehensive way. They did not concern themselves about ethnological theories, influences of race and climate and geography, streams of tendency, and the operation of unseen laws; but they knew all about the great people and the great events of time. They were conversant with all that was concrete and ascertainable; and they took sides as eagerly and as definitely in the strifes of Yorkist and Lancastrian, Protestant and Papist, Roundhead and Cavalier, as in the controversies over the Reform Bill or the Repeal of the Corn Laws.

Then, again, all educated people knew the laws of architecture and of painting; and, though it must be confessed that in these respects their views were not very original, still they were founded on first-hand knowledge of famous

models, and, though conventional, were never ignorant.

But it will be said that all this represents no very overwhelming mass of culture, and that, if these were all the accomplishments which the last generation had to boast of, their successors have no reason to dread comparison.

Well, I expressly said that I was not describing learned or even exceptionally well-read people, but merely the general level of educated society; and that level is, I am persuaded, infinitely lower than it was in former generations. Of course there are instances to the contrary which perplex and disturb the public judgment, and give rise to the delusion that this is a learned age. Thus we have in society and politics such scholars as Lord Milner and Mr. Asquith and Mr. Herbert Paul; but then there have always been some scholars in public life, so there is nothing remarkable in the persistence of the type; whereas, on the other hand, the system of smattering and top-dressing which pervades Universities and Public Schools produces an ever-increasing crop of gentlemen who, like Mr. Riley in "The Mill on the Floss," have brought away with them from Oxford or Cambridge a general sense of knowing Latin, though their comprehension of any particular Latin is not ready.

It is, I believe, generally admitted that we speak French less fluently and less idiomatically than our fathers. The "barbarous neglect" of Italian,



which used to rouse Mr. Gladstone's indignation, is now complete; and an even superstitious respect for the German language is accompanied by a curious ignorance of German literature. I remember an excellent picture in *Punch* which depicted that ideal representative of skin-deep culture—the Rev. Robert Elsmere—on his knees before the sceptical squire, saying, “Pray, pray, don't mention the name of another German writer, or I shall have to resign my living.”

Then, again, as regards women; of whom, quite as much as of men, I was thinking when I described the culture of bygone society. Here and there we see startling instances of erudition which throw a reflected and undeserved glory upon the undistinguished average. Thus we have seen a lady Senior Wrangler and a lady Senior Classic, and I myself have the honour of knowing a sweet girl-graduate with golden hair, who got two Firsts at Oxford.

The face of the earth is covered with Girls' High Schools, and Women's Colleges standing where they ought not. I am told, but do not know, that girl-undergraduates are permitted to witness physiological experiments in the torture-dens of science; and a complete emancipation in the matter of reading has introduced women to regions of thought and feeling which in old days were the peculiar domain of men. The results are not far to seek.

One lady boldly takes the field with an assault

on Christianity, and her apparatus of belated criticism and second-hand learning sets all society agape. Another fills a novel with morbid pathology, slays the villain by heart-disease, or makes the heroine interesting with phthisis; and people, forgetting Mr. Casaubon and Clifford Gray, exclaim, "How marvellous! This is, indeed, original research." A third, a fourth, and a fifth devote themselves to the task of readjusting the relation of the sexes, and fill their passionate volumes with seduction and lubricity. And here, again, just because our mothers did not traffic in these wares, the undiscerning public thinks that it has discovered a new vein of real though unsavoury learning, and ladies say, "It is not exactly a pleasant book, but one cannot help admiring the power."

Now I submit that these abnormalities are no substitute for decent and reasonable culture. Pedantry is not learning; and a vast deal of specialism, "mugged-up," as boys say, at the British Museum and the London Library, may co-exist with a profound ignorance of all that is really worth knowing. It sounds very intellectual to theorize about the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, and to scoff at St. John's "senile iterations and contorted metaphysics"; but, when a clergyman read St. Paul's eulogy on Charity instead of the address at the end of a wedding, one of his hearers said, "How very appropriate that was! Where did you get it from?"

We can all patter about the traces of Bacon's influence in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," and ransack our family histories for the original of "Mr. W. H." But, when "Cymbeline" was put on the stage, society was startled to find that the title-rôle was not a woman's. A year or two ago some excellent scenes from Jane Austen's novels were given in a Belgravian drawing-room, and a lady of the highest notoriety, enthusiastically praising the performance, enquired who was the author of the dialogue between Mr. and Mrs. John Dashwood, and whether he had written anything else.

I have known in these later years a judge who had never seen the view from Richmond Hill; a publicist who had never heard of Lord Althorp; and an authoress who did not know the name of Izaak Walton. But probably the most typical illustration of modern culture was the reply of a lady who had been enthusing over the Wagnerian Cycle, and, when I asked her to tell me quite honestly, as between old friends, if she really enjoyed it, replied, "Oh yes! I think one likes Wagner—*doesn't one?*"

## LI

### RELIGION

THERE once was an Evangelical lady who had a Latitudinarian daughter and a Ritualistic son. On Sunday morning, when they were forsaking the family pew and setting out for their respective places of objectionable worship, these graceless young people used to join hands and exclaim, "Look at us, dear mamma! Do we not exemplify what you are so fond of saying, 'Infidelity and superstition, those kindred evils, go hand in hand'?"

The combination thus flippantly stated is a conspicuous sign of the present times. The decay of religion and the increase of superstition are among the most noteworthy of the social changes which I have seen.

When I speak of the decay of religion, of course I must be understood to refer only to external observances. As to interior convictions, I have neither the will nor the power to investigate them. I deal only with the habits of religious practice, and in this respect the contrast between Then and Now is marked indeed.

In the first place, grace was then said before

and after dinner. I do not know that the ceremony was very edifying, but it was traditional and respectable. Bishop Wilberforce, in his diary, tells of a greedy clergyman who, when asked to say grace at a dinner-party, used to vary the form according to the character of the wine-glasses which he saw before him on the table. If they were champagne-glasses, he used to begin the benediction with "Bountiful Jehovah"; but, if they were only claret-glasses, he said, "We are not worthy of the least of Thy mercies."

Charles Kingsley, who generally drew his social portraits from actual life, described the impressive eloquence of the Rev. Mr. O'Blareaway, who inaugurated an exceptionally good dinner by praying "that the daily bread of our less-favoured brethren might be mercifully vouchsafed to them."

There was a well-remembered squire in Hertfordshire whose love of his dinner was constantly at war with his pietistic traditions. He always had his glass of sherry poured out before he sat down to dinner, so that he might get it without a moment's delay. One night, in his generous eagerness, he upset the glass just as he dropped into his seat at the end of grace, and the formula ran on to an unexpected conclusion, thus: "For what we are going to receive the Lord make us truly thankful—D——n!"

But, if the incongruities which attended grace before dinner were disturbing, still more so were the solemnities of the close. Grace after dinner

always happened at the moment of loudest and most general conversation. For an hour and a half people had been stuffing as if their lives depended on it—"one feeding like forty." After a good deal of sherry, the champagne had made its tardy appearance, had performed its welcome rounds, and had in turn been succeeded by port and home-brewed beer. Out of the abundance of the mouth the heart speaketh, and every one was talking at once, and very loud. Perhaps the venue was laid in a fox-hunting country, and then the air was full of such voices as these: "Were you out with the squire to-day?" "Any sport?" "Yes, we'd rather a nice gallop." "Plenty of the animal about, I hope?" "Well, I don't know. I believe that new keeper at Boreham Wood is a vulpicide. I don't half like his looks." "What an infernal villain! A man who would shoot a fox would poison his own grandmother." "Sh! Sh!" "What's the matter?" "*For what we have received,*" &c.

Or perhaps we are dining in London in the height of the season. Fox-hunting is not the theme, but the conversation is loud, animated, and discursive. A lyrical echo from the summer of 1866 is borne back upon my memory—

*Agreeable Rattle.*

This news from abroad is alarming ;  
 You've seen the *Pall Mall* of to-day !  
 Oh! Ilma di Murska was charming  
 To-night in the *Flauto*, they say.

Not a ghost of a chance for the Tories,  
In spite of Adullam and Lowe ;  
By the bye, have you heard the queer stories  
Of Overend, Gurney and Co. ?”

*Lively Young Lady.* Do you know you've been talking at the top of your voice all the time grace was going on ?

*Agreeable Rattle.* Not really ? I'm awfully sorry. But our host mumbles so, I never can make out what he's saying.

*Lively Young Lady.* I can't imagine why people don't have grace after dessert. I know I'm much more thankful for strawberry ice than for saddle of mutton.

And so on and so forth. On the whole, I am not sure that the abolition of grace is a sign of moral degeneracy, but I note it as a social change which I have seen.

Another such change is the disuse of Family Prayers. In the days of my youth, morning prayers at least formed part of the ritual of every well-ordered household. The scene recurs vividly to the mental eye—the dining-room arranged for breakfast, and the master of the house in top-boots and breeches with the family Bible in close proximity to the urn on the table. Mamma very often breakfasted upstairs ; but the sons and daughters of the house, perhaps with their toilettes not quite complete, came in with a rush just as the proceedings began, and a long row of maid-servants, headed by the housekeeper and supported by the

footmen, were ranged with military precision against the opposite wall. In families of a more pronouncedly religious tone, evening prayers were frequently superadded; and at ten o'clock the assembled guests were aroused from "Squails" or "Consequences" by the entrance of the butler with "Thornton's Family Prayers" on a silver salver. In one very Evangelical house which I knew in my youth, printed prayers were superseded by extempore devotions, and, as the experiment seemed successful, the servants were invited to make their contributions in their own words. As long as only the butler and the housekeeper voiced the aspirations of their fellows, all was well; but, in an evil moment, a recalcitrant kitchenmaid uttered an unlooked-for petition for her master and mistress—"And we pray for Sir Thomas and her Ladyship. Oh! may they have now hearts given them." And the bare suggestion that there was room for such an improvement caused a prompt return to the lively oracles of Henry Thornton.

I note the disappearance of the domestic liturgy; and here again, as in the matter of grace, I submit that, unless the rite can be decently, reasonably, and reverently performed, it is more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

Much more significant is the secularization of Sunday. This is not merely a change, but a change conspicuously for the worse. The amount of church-going always differed in different circles;



religious people went often and careless people went seldom, but almost every one went sometimes, if merely from a sense of duty and decorum. Mr. Gladstone, whose traditions were Evangelical, thought very poorly of what he called a "once-er," *i.e.* a person who attended divine service only once on a Sunday. He himself was always a "twice-er," and often a "thrice-er"; but to-day it would puzzle the social critic to discover a "twice-er," and even a "once-er" is sufficiently rare to be noticeable.

But far more serious than the decay of mere attendance at church is the complete abolition of the Day of Rest. People, who have nothing to do but to amuse themselves, work at that entrancing occupation with redoubled energy on Sundays. If they are in London, they whirl off to spend the "week-end" amid the meretricious splendours of the stockbroker's suburban paradise; and, if they are entertaining friends at their country houses, they play bridge or tennis or croquet; they row, ride, cycle, and drive, spend the afternoon in a punt, and wind up the evening with "The Washington Post."

All this is an enormous change since the days when the only decorous amusement for Sunday was a visit after church to the stables, or a walk in the afternoon to the home farm or the kitchen garden; and, of course, it entails a corresponding amount of labour for the servants. Maids and valets spend the "week-end" in a whirl of

packing and unpacking, and the whole staff of the kitchen is continuously employed.

In old days people used to reduce the meals on Sunday to the narrowest dimensions, in order to give the servants their weekly due of rest and recreation, and in a family with which I am connected the traditional bill of fare for Sunday's dinner, drawn by a cook who lived before the School Board, is still affectionately remembered—

Soup.

—

Cold Beef.

—

Salad.

—

*Cold Sweats.*

In brief, respectable people used to eat and drink sparingly on Sunday, caused no unnecessary work, went a good deal to church, and filled up their leisure time by visiting sick people in the cottages or teaching in the Sunday School. No doubt there was a trace of Puritan strictness about the former practice, and people too generally forgot that the First Day of the week is by Christian tradition a feast. Society has rediscovered that great truth. It observes the weekly feast by over-eating itself, and honours the day of rest by over-working its dependants.

## LII

### SUPERSTITION

“SUPERSTITION and infidelity usually go together. Professed atheists have trafficked in augury, and men who do not believe in God will believe in ghosts.” To-day I take up my parable concerning superstition, to which, time out of mind, the human spirit has betaken itself as soon as it parted company with faith.

I once asked a lady who, in her earlier life, had lived in the very heart of society, and who returned to it after a long absence, what was the change which struck her most forcibly. She promptly replied, “The growth of superstition. I hear people seriously discussing ghosts. In my day people who talked in that way would have been put in Bedlam ; their relations would have required no other proof that they were mad.”

My own experience entirely confirms this testimony as to the development of superstition, and I have had some peculiarly favourable opportunities of observing its moral effect upon its votaries. The only superstition tolerated in my youth was table-turning, and that was always treated as more than half a joke. To sit in a

darkened room round a tea-table, secretly join hands under the mahogany, and "communicate a revolving motion" to it (as Mr. Pickwick to his fists) was not bad fun when the company was mainly young and larky, but contained one or two serious people who desired to probe the mystery to its depths. Or, perhaps, our psychic force would cause the respectable piece of furniture to rear itself upon one leg, and deal out with a ponderous foot mysterious raps, which the serious people interpreted with their own admirable solemnity. I well remember a massive gentleman with an appalling stammer who proclaimed that some lost document which we had asked the table to discover would be found in the Vatican Library, "wrapped in a ragged palimpsest of Tertullian;" and the quaintness of the utterance dissolved the tables, or at least the table-turners, in laughter. This particular form of superstition became discredited among respectable people when sharpers got hold of it and used it as an engine for robbing the weak-minded. It died, poor thing, of exposure, and its epitaph was written by Browning in "Mr. Sludge, the Medium."

It was the same with ghost-stories. People told them—partly to fill gaps when reasonable conversation failed, and partly for the fun of making credulous hearers stare and gasp. But no one, except ladies as weak-minded as Byng's Half-Aunt in "Happy Thoughts," ever thought of taking them seriously. Bishop Wilberforce in-

vented a splendid story about a priest and a sliding panel and a concealed confession; and I believe that he habitually used it as a foolometer, to test the mental capacity of new acquaintances. But the Bishop belonged to that older generation which despised superstition, and during the last few years, twaddle of this kind has risen to the dignity of a pseudo-science.

Necromancy is a favourite substitute for religion. It supplies the element of mystery without which the human spirit cannot long subsist; and, as it does not require its adherents to practise self-denial, or get up early on Sunday, or subscribe to charities, or spend their leisure in evil-smelling slums, it is a cult particularly well adapted to a self-indulgent age. I vividly remember a scene which occurred just before the Coronation. A luxurious luncheon had been prolonged by the aid of coffee, kummel, and cigarettes till four o'clock; and the necromancers—surfeited, flushed, and a little maudlin—were lolling round the drawing-room fire. A whispered colloquy in a corner was heard through the surrounding chatter, and the hostess saw her opportunity. "Dear Lady De Spook, do let us hear. I know you are such a wonderful medium."

*Lady De Spook.* Really, it was nothing at all out of the common. I had come home dead tired from the opera, and just as I was going to bed I heard that rap—you know what I mean?

*Mr. Sludge* (enthusiastically). Oh yes, indeed

I do! No one who has ever heard it can ever forget it.

*Lady De Spook* (resuming). Well, and do you know it turned out to be poor dear Lord De Spook. It was wonderful how energetically he rapped, for you know he was quite paralysed years before he died; and the curious thing was that I couldn't make out what he said. It seemed to be, "Don't buy. Sarah. Search." I was too tired to go on talking to him, so I went to bed; but next day, do you know, my maid found the coronet which his first wife, whose name was Sarah, had worn at the last coronation. I was just going to order a new one. Wasn't it a wonderful interposition!—Such a saving!

*Chorus* (sentimentally). Ah, wonderful indeed! Our dear ones are never really lost to us.

Closely connected with necromancy is clairvoyance. A man whom I knew well was taken suddenly and seriously ill, and his relations, who were enthusiastic spookists, telegraphed for the celebrated clairvoyante Mrs. Endor. She duly arrived, threw herself into a trance, declared that the patient would die, came to, and declared that there was nothing much the matter, and that he would be about again in two or three days. Then, having pocketed her cheque, she returned to London. The patient grew rapidly worse, and died; and his relations, though I am sure they sincerely mourned him, were much sustained in the hour of bereavement by the thought that the

opinion which Mrs. Endor had given in her trance had proved to be the right one, and that spiritual science was justified by the result.

But, after all, necromancy and clairvoyance are a little old-fashioned. Crystal-gazing is more modish. 'Tis as easy as lying. You gather open-mouthed round a glass ball, and the gifted gazer reports that which he or she can see, but which is invisible to grosser eyes. There are no bounds to the fascinating range of a crystal-gazer's fancy, nor to the awe-struck credulity with which his revelations are received.

But crystal is not the only medium through which a purged eye can discern the mysterious future. Coffee-grounds, though less romantic, are very serviceable. Our hostess is an expert in this form of science, and, being a thoroughly amiable woman, she makes the coffee say pretty much what we should like to hear. "Dear Mr. Taper, this is delightful. You will be Prime Minister before you die. It is true that your party will not be in office again just yet; but 'hope on, hope ever,' and trust your star."

"Oh! Mr. Garbage, I have such good news for you. Your next book will be an immense success, and, after that, Messrs. Skin & Flint will be more liberal, and, what with the American copyright and the acting rights, you will make quite a fortune."

Closely akin to the science of coffee-grounds is that of palmistry. A wretched gipsy who "tells

fortunes" at a race-meeting is sent to prison; but, when St. Berengaria's gets up a bazaar for its new vestry, a bejewelled lady sits in a secret chamber (for admission to which an extra half-crown is charged), and, after scrutinizing your line of life, tells you that you have had the influenza; and, projecting her soul into futurity, predicts that the next time you have it you will get pneumonia unless you are very careful.

Of course, these minor superstitions are mainly ridiculous, and to get up moral indignation over them would be a waste of force. But one cannot speak so lightly of the degrading cults which are grouped together under the name of Spiritualism. I have known a "Spiritual Wife" who was highly commended in spookish circles because she left her husband, family, and home in one continent and crossed the world to find her "affinity" in another. I have known a most promising boy whose health was destroyed and his career ruined by a hypnotic experiment performed on him without his parents' knowledge. I have known a mesmeric clergyman who cozened the women of his congregation out of money, character, and in some cases reason. Where occultism is pursued, all veracity and self-respect disappear; pruriency finds a congenial lodgment, and the issue is—well—what we sometimes see exhibited in all its uncomeliness at the Central Criminal Court.

The wisest lawgiver who ever lived said, "Thou



shalt not suffer a witch to live." And a great judge acted on the rule. But that was a long time ago. We have improved upon the jurisprudence of Moses and the methods of Sir Matthew Hale. Stoning and hanging are a little out of date, but boycotting is a remedy still within our reach. Whoso is wise will ponder these things, and will give occultists, male and female, an uncommonly wide berth.

## LIII

### THE REMNANT

SOME recent observations of mine on the deterioration of society have drawn this interesting response from an eminent clergyman in the north of London :—

“ Is it possible that in ‘ Society ’ itself there is a point of resistance which may be touched by an effective appeal coming from the wholesomer elements in English life ? Belonging as I do to that section of English life which is a stranger to Society in the technical sense, I am deeply impressed with the taint which comes to all circles of society from the contamination of the circle at the top. To elicit a strong opinion and a resolute determination from what I may call the Puritan side of English life, may be perhaps the first step towards the correction of the evil which Mr. Russell describes. Are there not in Society itself some men and women who retain the high ideals and the strenuous purposes of their ancestry ? Can they be induced to raise their protest, to assert their principles, and open the way to a better—because a purer—future ? I venture to make this appeal because it is my

fixed conviction that even in the worst and most degraded society there are men who sigh for better things, just as in the worst and most degraded men there remains a desire, however overlaid, for regeneration."

Well, frankly I think that an amiable insanity deludes my reverend friend if he expects a moral reformation in the sort of society which I have been describing. It would tax the combined energies of St. John the Baptist, Savonarola, the two Wesleys, and George Whitefield, all rolled into one, to convince the people whom I have in my mind of their ethical shortcomings. They have made their own beds, in every sense of that expressive phrase, and must lie on them till the cataclysm comes which will bring us all to our senses.

But I am reminded that I promised to write not exclusively about deteriorations in society, but about changes of all kinds. That there has been some change for the better I readily admit, as well as an enormous number of changes for the worse. "All things are double," says the Son of Sirach, "one against the other," and in this closing chapter I will try to balance our gains and our losses.

That there has always been a mixture of good and bad in society is only another way of saying that society is part of mankind; but, if I am right in my survey, the bad just now is flagrant and ostentatious to a degree which we have not

known in England since 1837. There was once a moralist who spoke of the narrow path which lay between right and wrong, and similarly there used to be a Debatable Land which lay between the good and evil districts of society. It was inhabited by the people who, having no ethical convictions of their own, go very much as they are led. It was written of them long ago that—

“They eat, they drink, they sleep, they plod,  
They go to church on Sunday;  
And many are afraid of God,  
And more of Mrs. Grundy.”

As long as Mrs. Grundy was a real, though comical, guardian of social propriety—as long as the highest influences in the social system tended towards virtue and decorum—the inhabitants of the Debatable Land were even painfully respectable. But now that the “trend” (as Pennialinus calls it) is all the other way, and Mrs. Grundy has been deposed as a bore and an anachronism, they willingly follow the “smart” multitude to do evil; and so the area covered by social wickedness is much larger than in former times. In other words, the evil of society is both worse in quality and larger in quantity than it was fifty—or even twenty—years ago.

Now if this be true—and I hold it to be unquestionable—what have we to set against it? I reply, the greatly increased activity of those who are really good. In old days the good were

good in a quiescent and lethargic way. They were punctual in religious observances, public and private; exemplary in the home and the family, and generous to the poor. But their religion could scarcely be called active, except in so far as pottering about among the cottages, or teaching a class of well-washed children in the Sunday School, can be reckoned as active employments; and even such activities as these were as a rule confined to women.

Sir Walter Scott believed that "there were few young men, and those very sturdy moralists, who would not rather be taxed with some moral peccadillo than with want of horsemanship." And, in days much more recent than the beloved Sir Walter's, men, if they were religious, studiously kept their light under a bushel, and took the utmost pains to avoid being detected in acts of charity or devotion.

Nowadays all this is changed, and changed, in my opinion, much for the better. Religious people are ready to let the world know what they believe, and are active in the pursuit of the things which are pure and lovely and of good report. Well-dressed young men combine dancing with slumming. Untidiness and dulness are no longer the necessary concomitants of virtue. Officers of the Guards sing in the choir and serve the altar. Men whose names are written in the book of the peerage as well as the Book of Life conduct Bible-classes and hand

round the hymn-books at mission-services. The group of young M.P.'s who were nicknamed "Hughligans" showed the astonished House of Commons that Religion is as practical a thing as Politics, and (as one of them lately said) they cheerfully encountered that hot water which is the modern substitute for boiling oil. The Universities send their best athletes and social favourites to curacies in the slums or martyrdom in the mission-field. The example set by Mr. James Adderley, when he left Christ Church and founded the Oxford House at Bethnal Green, has been followed in every direction. Both the Universities, and most of the colleges, run "Settlements," where laymen, in the intervals of professional work and social enjoyment, spread religion, culture, and physical education amid the "dim, common populations" of Camberwell and Stratford and Poplar.

The Public Schools, formerly denounced as "the seats and nurseries of vice," make their full contribution to active religion. Eton and Winchester and Harrow have their Missions in crowded quarters of great towns. At one school, the boys have a guild of devotion; at another, a voluntary Bible-class with which no master intermeddles. And so the young citizens of the privileged order gain their first lessons in religious and social service, and carry the idea with them to the Army or the Bar or the Stock Exchange or the House of Commons. All this is, in my

eyes, a social change which is also a clear and enormous gain.

But, if what I say is true of men, it is even more conspicuously true of women. They are no longer content with the moderate church-going at comfortable hours, and the periodical visits to particularly clean cottages, which at one time were the sum-total of their activities. Every well-organized parish has its staff of woman-workers, who combine method with enthusiasm and piety with common sense. Belgravia and Mayfair send armies of district-visitors to Hoxton and Poplar. Girls from fashionable homes, pretty and well dressed, sacrifice their evenings to clubs and social gatherings for factory-hands and maids-of-all-work. Beneath the glittering surface of social life, there is a deep current of wise and devoted effort for those unhappy beings who are least able to help themselves. And all this philanthropic energy is distinctively and avowedly Christian. It is the work of men and women, young and old, widely differentiated from one another in outward circumstances of wealth and accomplishments and social influence, but all agreed about "the one thing needful," and all keen to confess their faith before a hostile world.

What, then, is the conclusion of the whole matter? Society, during the years in which I have known it, has changed enormously, alike in its exterior characteristics and, as far as I can judge, in its inner spirit. While some of the

changes have been simply innocuous, and a few even beneficial, the great majority have been gross and palpable deteriorations. An onlooker who knew society well thus described its present condition : " We are living in an age of decadence, and we pretend not to know it. There is not a feature wanting, though we cannot mention the worst of them. We are Romans of the worst period, given up to luxury and effeminacy, and caring for nothing but money. We care no more for beauty in art, but only for a brutal realism. Sport has lost its manliness, and is a matter of pigeons from a trap, or a mountain of crushed pheasants to sell to your own tradesmen. Religion is coming down to jugglers and table-turnings and philanderings with cults brought, like the rites of Isis, from the East ; and as for patriotism, it is turned on like beer at election times, or worked like a mechanical doll by wire-pullers. We belong to one of the most corrupt generations of the human race. To find its equal one must go back to the worst times of the Roman Empire, and look devilish close then. But it's uncommonly amusing to live in an age of decadence ; you see the funniest sights and you get every conceivable luxury, and you die before the irruption of the barbarians."

This is, I believe, a true indictment against the age in which our lot is cast, although the utterance has just that touch of exaggeration which secures a hearing for unpalatable truth. But the man who



wrote it left out of account that redeeming element in our national life which I have discussed in this closing chapter. After all, there is a world-wide difference between the "Majority" and the "Remnant,"—and the ten righteous men may yet save the guilty city.

## POSTSCRIPT

*The bulk of this book appeared in the "Manchester Guardian," and my thanks are due to Mr. C. P. Scott for permission to reproduce it. The last twelve chapters were originally published under the title, "For Better? For Worse?" and they reappear by the kind consent of Mr. Fisher Unwin.*

G. W. E. R.

*Twelfth Night, 1907.*











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